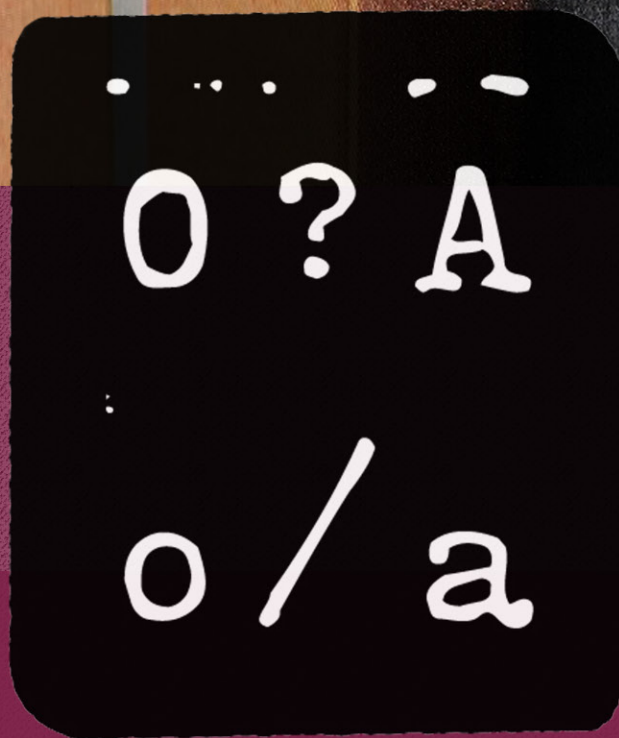




Multilingual
МНОГОЯЗЫЧНЫЙ
Multilingue



多言語
تاغللا ددعتم
Plurilingüe

obra/artifact

ISSUE 5 // APRIL 2018

Edu Barreto + Korbin Jones // Eli Binkovitz // Kimberly Brincklow // Ana Brotas // Simon Brown // Mark Budman
Cristina DeSouza // Woody Dismukes // Federico Federici // Jan Heiman // Addison Hoggard // Desirée Jung
Manivillie Kanagasabapathy // R. Keith // Stephanie Laterza // Nick Leibe // KA Masters // Irène Mathieu
Dona Mayoora // Adelina Molina // Lisa Done Moore // Eric Odynocki // Lisa Allen Ortiz // Nika Ostby
John Pluecker + Jorge Galván Flores // Kirsten Ruginski // Ryoko Sekiguchi + Lindsay Turner
David Shames // Alysha Sidhu // Patrick Sylvain // Drake Truber // Viviane Vives // Bessie F. Zaldívar

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introduction to Issue 5

Dear Readers,

The languages we learn have roots in our surroundings, our privileges, our histories, our abundance, and our poverty. However, no matter the number and fluency of different spoken languages, we humans share a common language of emotion. We share love and loss and belonging and fear. We are conflicted about our morality and mortality, and we question our purpose. This common emotional tongue ties us together across borders and cultures and time. Each life is a different path and set of experiences that combines together in the shared story of humanity.

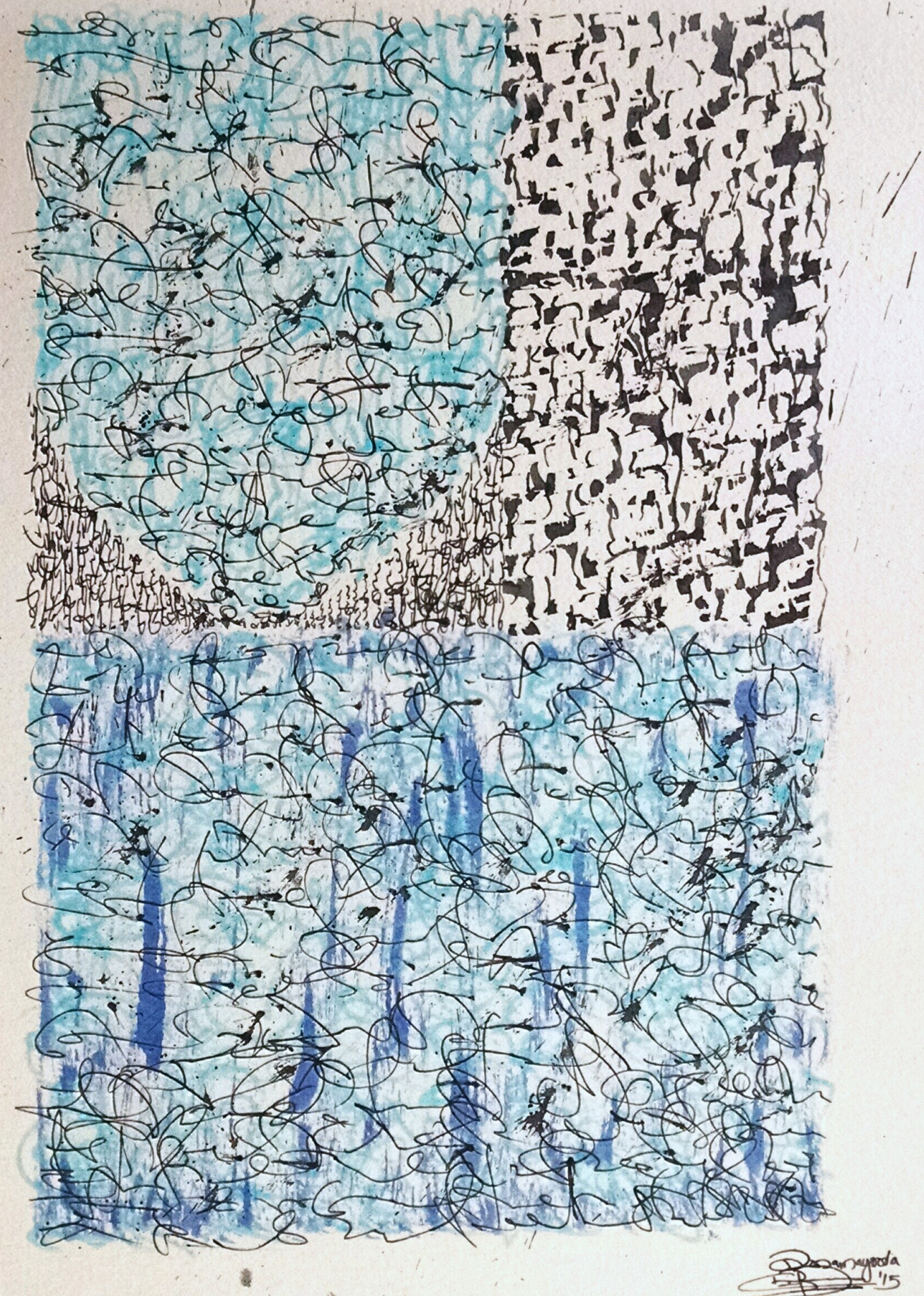
This was a beautiful and difficult work — to build an issue that strives to decentralize one language of power and identity, to interpret living physicality into the expression of word and image, to amplify sounds, colors, and voices.

Although arranged in the Table of Contents, the works are not printed by genre but instead flow through emotions and experiences that connect them, and us, together. In this Multilingual Issue of *Obra/Artifact*, we hope you encounter languages as lenses into stories that are both wildly foreign and strangely familiar.

Sincerely,

The Editors

Erica McCay, Nikki Fragala Barnes, Jacklyn Gion, Shelby Smotherman
& the *Obra/Artifact* staff





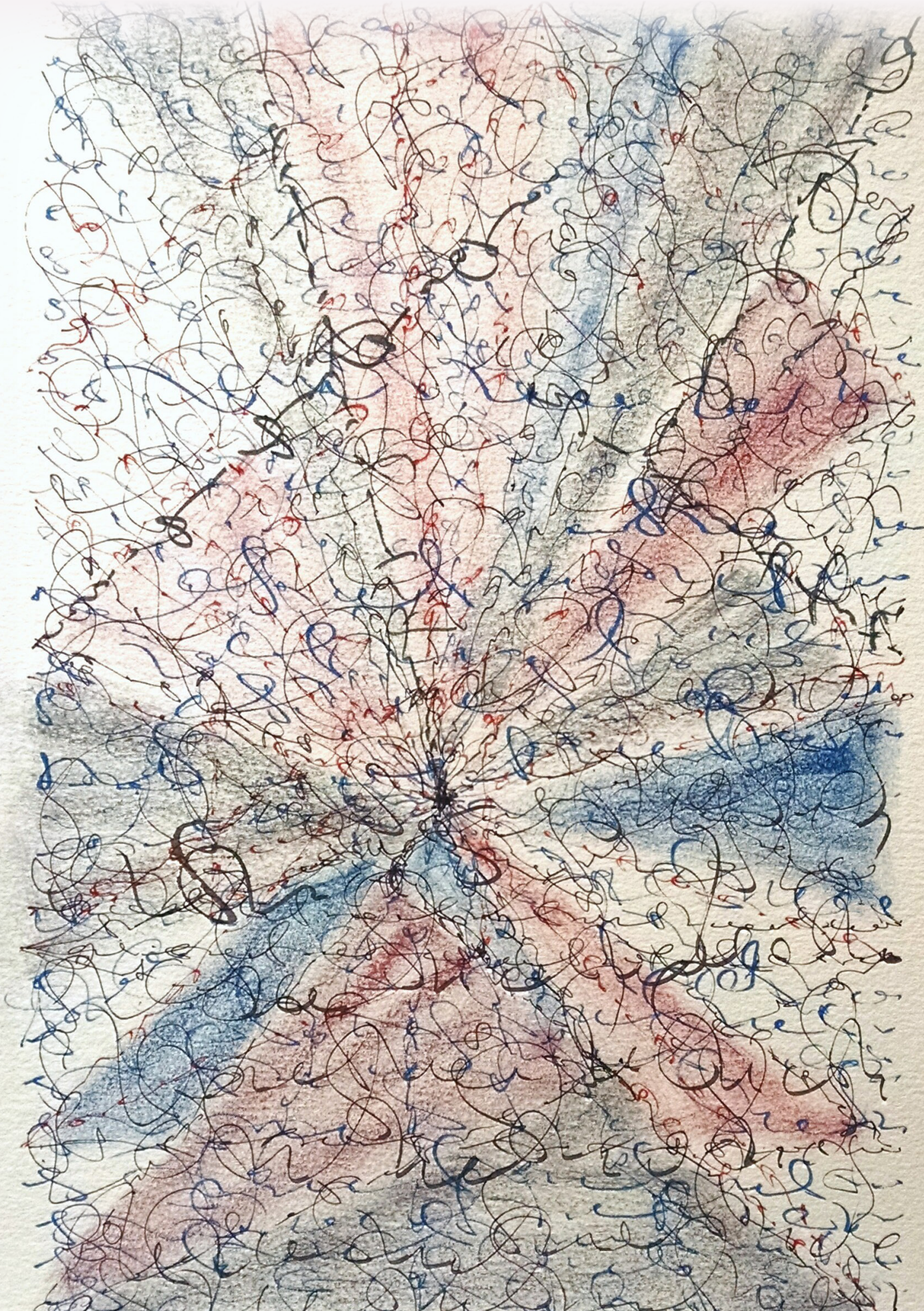
quando Yemanjá e Oxúm se beijam

Woody Dismukes

This is a brackish love,
with salt slipping through lips
the way *o Rio Guaíba* slips
into *a Lagoa dos Patos*. The way
the word *Rio* slips from your tongue
into mine as I stutter through
o Lago. You insist I am not saying it
right no matter how many times
I say it. You insist two things
cannot be the same as one.

*Mas quando
é um Rio um Rio? Quando é o mar o mar?*
Is there no kiss that slips one
into the other? Is there no language
that can make a silence sing?
Your eyes slip hazel into *verde*.
Your mouth slips *ordem e progresso*
into mine.

Often, I have lost myself
in the intricacies of words, drifting leagues
amidst this abandoned ocean. Yet here you are
slipping fingers through my fingers
as if to you this water were simply water.



adagio ma non troppo [excerpt]

Ryoko Sekiguchi + Lindsay Turner [Les Figs Press]

地図上で示される一
地点にみずからを繋
留するものたちと、
通りとその名の上を
幾度も指でなぞり、
通行可能な行程をト
レースし続けるもの
とは決して同じ面に
位置することはない、

Ceux qui se lient volontairement à un point fixe dans le plan et
celui qui inlassablement calque des doigts les rues avec leur nom et
ne cesse de tracer les différents parcours possibles, ils ne sont jamais
sur une même surface,

Those who give themselves easily to a fixed point on the map and
those who trace the streets and street names with their fingers,
tirelessly, who never stop planning out all the different possible paths,
they're never even on the same surface,

待たなくてもいいと言われた六時半を過ぎてもベレンで待っている、細身の、二の腕は少女らしささえたまだ残してふっくらとその人の頬のように、心配気ではありながら、または遅れると予め告げておいたにも関わらず、三分遅れで行ってみるとあれほど待ち侘びた姿は見出せず、あれこれと理由を想像しながら帽子の角度を気忙しげに直し続ける、それらの横顔を少し離れて眺めながら七三頁と五四頁、ここで頁を捲ればまた一つの文章を付け加えてしまえばその手に実際に触れ、指に触れさせられるのだろうか、でもどの時制で、

南向きの窓から日光の浸食を防ぎ、暑気を少しでも払おうと吊るされた灰色のブラインドカーテンは上方に埃が溜りがちで、風が入れば薄片に分かれてタイプライターを打つ手やキーボードの上、椅子の背に掛けられた上着に落ちたりもした。大通りから流れてくる車や雑踏音までが時の停滞を裏付けるような昼下がり、光量の変化にせめても進展への期待をかけつつ指を上げ、下ろすことを繰り返していると、繰り上がる紙の最終行に、「待ち合わせの必要がない生へと頁を移すこと」そう文字が打たれてきたのを見て、待ち合わせの相手の方に思わず顔を上げ、どこかにあるのかもしれない、音の聞こえないタイプライターが心に浮かん

Le store, baissé pour éviter l'érosion de la lumière du soleil à travers les fenêtres exposées au sud et pour tromper ne serait-ce qu'un peu la chaleur, accumulait souvent des poussières qui, au moindre souffle de vent, tombaient en petites lamelles sur les mains occupées à taper à la machine à écrire, sur le clavier ou sur les vestes suspendues au dos des chaises. L'après-midi, quand même le bruit des voitures et des rues ne faisait qu'accentuer la stagnation du temps, et que je réitérais le geste de relever et de baisser les doigts en espérant voir au moins un mouvement dans la quantité de la lumière, j'aperçus les lettres dactylographiées à la dernière ligne sur le papier qui remontait gra-duellement : « déplacer la page vers une vie qui ne nécessite pas de rendez-vous » ; levant la tête vers celui qui m'avait donné rendez-vous, l'image d'une machine à écrire dont on n'entendrait pas le bruit, qui pourrait peut-être exister quelque part, m'est venue à l'esprit.

The blind, lowered against the sunlight coming through the south-facing windows to keep out the least bit of heat, often accumulates layers of dust which at the slightest breath of wind fall in tatters on the hands working away at the typewriter, on the keyboard, or on the jackets hung from the backs of chairs. In the afternoon, when even the noises of the cars and the streets only accentuate the stagnation of time, when I kept raising and lowering my fingers, hoping at least to see some change in the quantity of light, I saw a line of text at the bottom of the page rising slowly into view: "move the page towards a life that doesn't need any meetings." Raising my head towards the one I was next supposed to meet, the image of a typewriter whose sound went unheard, which I suppose could exist somewhere, suddenly came to mind.

Attendre à Bélem après six heures et demie alors qu'on lui a dit qu'il était inutile d'attendre à cette heure passée, une figure fine, ses bras sont doux et lui donnent encore l'allure d'une petite fille ainsi que ses joues même lorsqu'elle a l'air inquiète, ou bien celui qui arrive au rendez-vous avec trois minutes de retard et qui ne trouve pas celle tant désirée bien qu'il ait prévu le retard éventuel et qui sans cesse remet son chapeau ; en regardant ces profils d'un peu loin, à la page 73 et à la page 54, si seulement je tournais la page ou ajoutais une phrase de plus j'arriverais à toucher réellement leurs mains ou à faire se toucher leurs doigts, mais avec quelle concordance des temps,

To wait at Bélem until half past six—although they told him it was useless to keep waiting so long—for that delicate figure, her sweet arms which, like her cheeks, give her the air of a young girl even though she looks worried, or the one who arrives three minutes late, the person he wants so much not even there, though he had foreseen the possible delay and keeps putting on and taking off his hat, observing these profiles from a little farther off, from page 73 and from page 54: if only I turned the page or added one more sentence I'd manage actually to touch their hands or to make their fingers touch, but with what co-operation of which time,

DCA -> SDQ

Irène Mathieu

i.

I'm with a group of other Americans, trying to get into a nightclub. The bouncer lets the boys in, nods & winks. Stops me. *Tu cédula, por favor?*

I pretend I don't speak Spanish, level & cut my eyes into razors. *I'm not Dominican.*

He looks me over, considers, steps aside. But the sugar on my tongue has already dissolved, rotten aftertaste thinly coating my teeth.

I'm strung in the cobwebbed night dense as two-hundred-year-old cotton bales, as sugarcane stacked in wagons, dense as the salt-iron throb of blood.

Of course I want to leave then, but the boys are already throwing back rum shots, and I don't have the heart.

ii.

The incredible thing about this country is that we don't see race here. It's all melting pot, olla de sancocho, everyone does bachata the same, you know?

My friend's face is a cup of cream. Our parents sew skin, fix hearts. Our hands are soft as clean gauze. Our necks are smooth, our breaths confident. When we smile our teeth look like boarding passes.

We are smiling in a restaurant in the old Colonial City, perfect slices of stewed goat on our white plates.

I look down and think I see the goat's heart. I want to say, *there is a faint bleating coming from my plate*

but I don't have the mouth.

iii.

<i>what do you call a goat trying to get into a nightclub?</i>	a billyclub swinging.
<i>what do you call Billy and his friends throwing words like darts at you?</i>	a faint bleeding.
<i>what do you call a game of darts in the Colonial City?</i>	a morning.
<i>what do you call a game of darts in Washington, D.C.?</i>	a bodyclub mourning.
<i>what do you call a ghost that dances on your plate?</i>	[]

what do you call a bleeding morning of darts? a word throwing clubs in the city? a mourning dance at the club?

what do you call the precise form of surgery in which a heart is removed from a person while she is still walking, still speaking, and placed on a white plate?

what do you call what sugar does to a body, how it melts, sticks, damns the pipes, slows blood as it tries to push, slows the tuckering heart, ties it up like a goat?

what should we call this type of drowning?



asthma exacerbation

Irène Mathieu

little fast-breathing girl
little air machine over-worked

I draw your lungs dry-
erase so your father, who looks
like my father, can see why
your chest flutters this way:
I diagnose a trapped canary inside.

I have felt a fist convulse suddenly
behind my sternum, too,
though not as tight as what grips you,
and wondered what to do with all this yellow.

the baby in the bed next door cries out
after her father steps away
and you say *el bebé está llorando.*

ancestors dreamed of our baby-bones flown
across bodies of water – what rattling is done
to them in this city of wronged air. you hear it,
you sing it in short breaths.

when I say I want to draw the air around you tight
I mean: keep saying what is wrong
until it has loosened, the way a lung expands,
the way a canary escapes.

anaphylaxis

Lisa Done Moore

When I met death (the second time)
the July lake was cold glass
grey like my father's eyes

I ran in manic
dopamine of sunshine
slipped out
onto hot white sand
a fish:
Lips ripe and swollen
body slow
blood desperate

Eyes locked open
a pocket knife flicked
at sweet blue sky
Pupils dilated black
shock closing in,
I only say grey glaciers:
world trapped in dark ice
(jack pines, high hills and bear berries)
contracting.

Internal decapitation
of the mind and spine
A disarticulation
as my blood stilled.

Bones are syllables
tangent in the quiet brush
(near the walking path)
without the syntax of ligaments,
the meaning of tendons
Skin envelope.

You are here too
On the shady side of the dune
Near the guttate pin cherries

Ants along your long thigh bone

There is a lover's fracture:
your heel was cracked once
by small rocks you threw
at dark windows

Our hammers and anvils and stapes
Forgotten like small balsam sticks
in the undergrowth

My little jaw silent
driftwood.

The sun sets
orange fire

In your ribcage
of sun-bleached beams
- a Carlstadt cabin twisting into sand -
Your heart the black hole
that invented all gravity

And now there is no light.

ded

Alysha Sidhu

From English: You wouldn't kill me, would you?
To Bulgarian: Вие няма да ме убие, бихте ли?
Back to English: You won't kill me, will you?
To Catalan: Vostè no em matarà, es vostè?
Back to English: You are not going to kill me, will you?
To Chinese Simplified: 你不会杀了我，你会吗？
Back to English: You're not going to kill me, you know?
To Chinese Traditional: 你不是要殺了我，你知道嗎？
Back to English: You're not going to kill me, you know?
To Czech: Nechceš mě zabít, víte?
Back to English: Do you want to kill me, you know?
To Danish: Vil du dræbe mig, du ved?
Back to English: Do you want to kill me, you know?
To Dutch: Wilt u om me te doden, weet je?
Back to English: Do you want to kill me, you know?
To Estonian: Kas sa tahad tappa mind, tead?
Back to English: Do you want to kill me, you know?
To Finnish: Haluatko tappaa minut, tiedät?
Back to English: Do you want to kill me, you know?
To French: Vous voulez me tuer, vous connaissez ?
Back to English: You want to kill me, you know?
To German: Weißt Sie wollen mich töten, du?
Back to English: You want to kill me, do you?
To Greek: Θέλετε να με σκοτώσεις, σας;
Back to English: You want to kill me, you?
To Haitian Creole: Ou vle touye m, ou?
Back to English: You put me to death, you?
To Hebrew: שמת אותי למוות, אתה?
Back to English: You put me to death.
To Hungarian: Engem meg halálra.
Back to English: Me to death.
To Indonesian: Saya mati.
Back to English: I am dead.
To Italian: Io sono morto.
Back to English: I'm dead.
To Japanese: 死んだよ。
Back to English: I'm dead.
To Korean: 난 죽 었 어입니다.
Back to English: I'm dead.
To Latvian: Es esmu miris.
Back to English: I'm dead.
To Lithuanian: Aš miręs.
Back to English: I'm dead. |

delusion ~ delizyon

Patrick Sylvain

1-
Colonial presence
Produced grotesque contortions
Of beings. Villains.
Drunken delusionists and
Arsonists blazing the sky.

Prezans kolonyal
Pwodui kontòsyonis moun
Malouk. Vye vilen.
Delizyonis tafyatè
Ak bouladò paradi.

2-
America is
A silversmith that only
Shapes fitted handcuffs.

Amerik se yon
Ajantye ki sèlman bay
Menòt mezire.

Attila, the President for Life of the East

Mark Budman

Your name means “daddy” in old Germanic.
А немцы наши враги.
You talk down to me from horseback,
as if I’m a pope who is defending Rome from you.
Хоть я и не католик.
A slab of meat is warming between your thighs
and the side of the horse.
Лошадь захромала, командир убит.
Your wispy beard
is singed by the camera lights
when they interview you
on CNN.
По русски.
Daddy,
though I left your country
half a lifetime ago,
I can never escape your reach.
Где бы я не жил.
Your arrows
blot out the sun and the moon
in my dreams.
All roads lead to Rome, Daddy.
You are coming for me.

as apple pie

Eric Odynocki

Two cultures merge in an American wood. At the bend in the lane dappled bronze under braided boughs stands our Cape Cod where we prepare for guests. Mom and dad smooth linens while my siblings and I decorate the living and dining rooms until the ceilings are kaleidoscopic waves of papel picado, matrioszki, and knickknack scarecrows.

The bell rings and I open the door to a deluge of aunts, uncles, and cousins. They bring the belly of the moon and the edge of the Black Sea ribboned in blossoms and songs and their amor, their miłość, their love. Our chorus of laughter and embraces bewilders neighbors who peek through generic curtains and over assembly-line fences. To them, our collage of phonemes and melanin is too dissonant, too mismatched. But I hear the harmony; I see the pattern. *Don’t you recognize your own portrait?* I call. I’m answered with a disappearing act.

Grandparents pass the threshold, swat from their napes decades-thick bad breath of dictatorial regimes; the stench hangs in the air, moistened with blood drops of desaparecidos and pogromy. I hug abuelo, abuela, dziadek and babcia. Their affection scalds with hope.

Dad leads the men to the backyard where they start to grill and discuss the World Cup. Abuela and babcia automatically enter the kitchen where mom, tías, and ciocie have already unleashed clouds of spice and herb. Abuela holds an ear of maíz and says there is a face of an ancestor in each gilded kernel. Babcia unravels skazki from potato skin swirls.

The town crier passes in front of the house. He wears a beaked mask and pulls a cart with a white sheet that covers a lumpy mound. He calls out with a clang, *Bring out your foreign-born!* Babcia scoffs and mumbles, *Sounds familiar.* Abuela laughs, too. *My garden bloomed in the Baja desert long before any flowers in May.*

The dinner table, wreathed in marigolds and sunflowers, is a zócalo of food: gołąbki and tamales, kielbasa and chorizo, rosół and pozole. My tíos, tías, ciocie, and wujekowie share quizzical glances about how they soak the soup: tortilla on one side and chleb on the other. The four-hundred-pound turkey, its breast and drumsticks sizzled to the juiciest shade of ochre, is a crowd-pleaser. Dessert is an avalanche of pączki and conchas. Abuela and babcia exchange recipes on how to control their husbands. Abuelo admits he’s never seen snow to wide-eyed dziadek. The baby boomers reminisce Woodstock and Disco. Crowded around the fireplace crackle, my siblings and all our cousins trade nightmares of la Llorona and Baba Yaga.

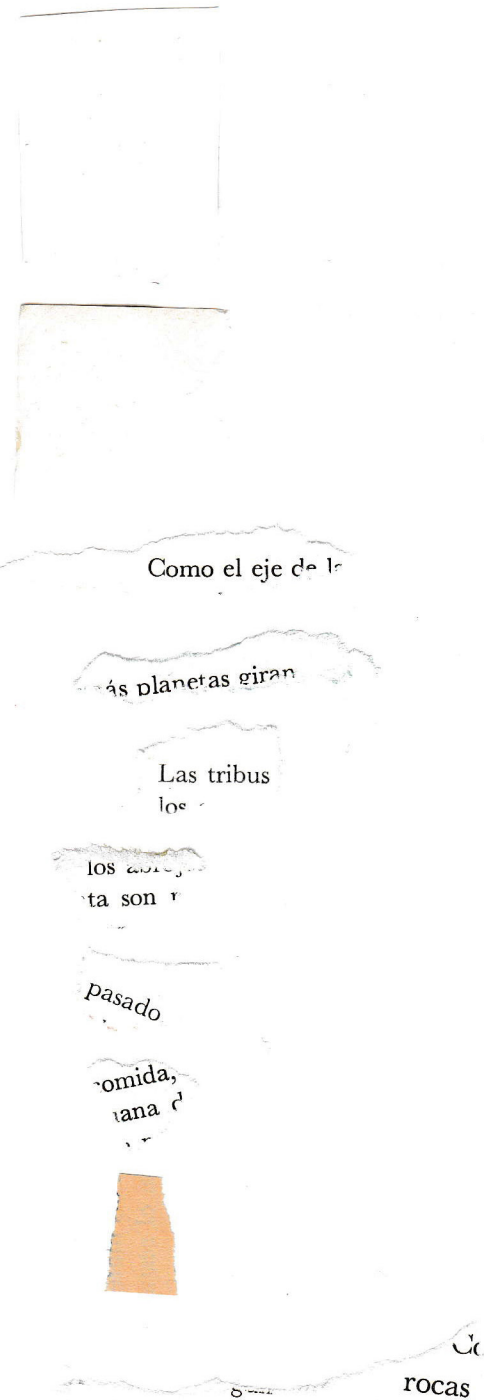
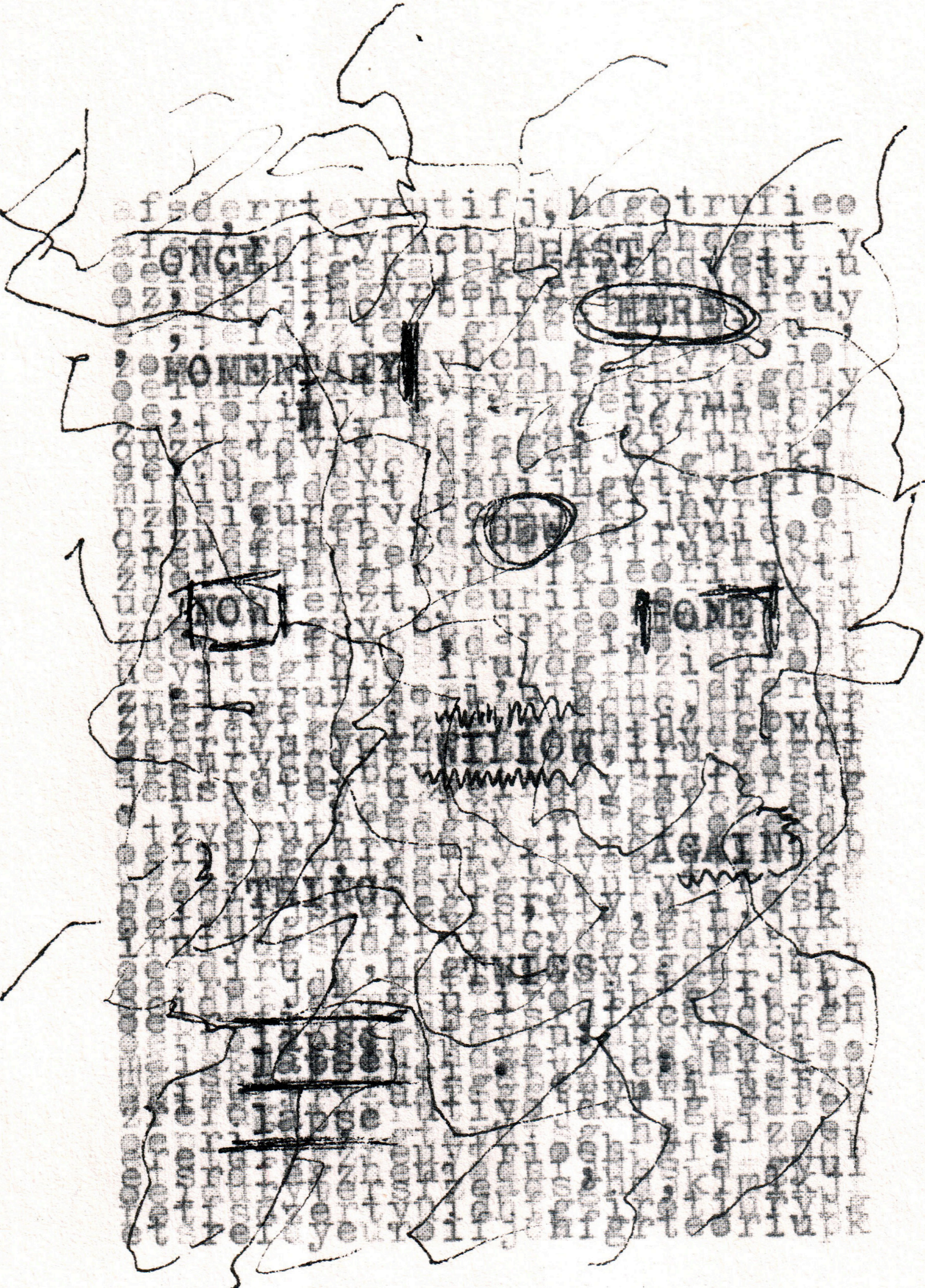
My one-year-old niece, who looks like dad and shares his temperament, begins to fuss. Dziadek takes out his bandura and croons in a language older than the rest of us can remember, Ой у гаю, при Дунаю Соловей щебече... Dad cradles his wnuczka in a waltz. Afterward, over dad’s shoulder, mom lulls la Sandunga until la nena falls asleep. Mom and dad wrap her in a dream-patched quilt.

At night, the metiche next door comes to complain about the fiddler that arrived with dziadek and babcia; he’s playing too loud on the roof. *What are you celebrating?* The metiche demands. I try to ask someone but I can’t: a hurricane of string riffs propels couples in a gyroscopic dance. Dziadek jumps brazen-faced the POW hopak through a bullet-holed flashback of World War II Europe. Abuelo cheers him on, raising a glass of his favorite spirit: tequila infused with guitar-plucked tears of a thousand mariachi songs. Abuela and babcia clap along as they tend to my niece who is awake from her nap. She watches the mirth, spellbound, and learns to marionette feet, hips, and hands with her polyphonic heartbeat. I look back at the metiche and finally answer, *Another frontier. Would you like to join us?* The metiche squints his scrutiny, *How do you understand each other?* My smile glints like a sterling harmonica, *Have you never read our legends?*

We all speak Loss fluently.

studies on asemic interferences
on (and within) concrete structures #5

Federico Federici



excerpt from Ch. 5 of The Lunasole Class

Stephanie Laterza

(Quito, Ecuador, Summer 1994)

Mami brushes past Tío Jaime and creaks open the wooden paneled doors to Abuelita’s dimly-lit bedroom. We find my eighty-year-old grandmother snoring in a single bed covered in a yellowed crocheted bedspread she made when she could still see well. She wears her white hair combed back from her forehead in streaks that match the lines on her pale face. It’s strange to see her in bed instead of in the kitchen cooking a feast and giving orders to the housekeepers. And, in between, bitching loudly enough to them about *la vaga Rita* for Beatriz and me to hear. If I’m honest, I think that, among other reasons, is why I love my grandmother, but I can’t say I’ve ever liked her. I’ve never been as close to Abuelita as Marla, who lived here for awhile and would be torn up enough for the both of us to see her like this. I might burn in hell for admitting that, but it’s the truth.

Mami kneels by her mother’s bedside and rubs her arm. “La bendición, Mamita. Soy Digna,” she says, her voice becoming ragged.

My grandmother smiles before opening her eyes. “Mi negra! Dios te bendiga, mijal!” Abuelita calls her negra because Mami didn’t inherit Abuelita’s pale skin, blond hair, or green eyes like some of her other siblings. Or Beatriz. Even Tío Jaime has hazel eyes, Mami has said many times, referring to the blend between Abuelita’s green and my grandfather’s black eyes.

When Abuelita looks at me, her green eyes sparkle in the sunlight that seeps through a crack in the window panel. Green eyes are pretty, but Mami’s dark eyes, which I have too, and her café con leche skin, are beautiful.

“Hola Mamita querida!” says Mami, who by now is full-on crying as she stoops to hug my grandmother and kiss the top of her white scalp.

My eyes fall on a framed picture of a glowing blond Christ with a heart full of daggers that sits on Abuelita’s bureau. How anyone could find that picture comforting is beyond me. Christ’s blue eyes almost stare in judgment at our family, knowing Beatriz’s *pecado de Adán*.

I shudder and catch Abuelita’s gaze. She spits hard on the “j” when she says, “Sophia, ven mas cerca.”

“La bendición, Abuelita,” I say before stooping to kiss her forehead.

“Mi Flaca.” Abuelita smiles.

I guess she still sees the skeleton whose ribs she used to count every time she visited us in New York. “Imagina que esta niña nació en los Estados Unidos,” she would point out in horror as she lifted up my shirt and poked my ribs with her cold, bony fingers. Yeah, I still haven’t become a full-figured babe like Mami, despite my having been born in los Estados Unidos, where, Abuelita thinks, people have enough Jersey cow meat and Iowa corn to fill their bellies and there’s a McDonald’s on every street corner.

“Y cómo está mi Gorda?” Abuelita asks Mami. She means Marla.

“Muy bien, Mamita!” shouts Mami, though I don’t think Abuelita has lost her hearing. “En la universidad!”

“Que maravilla,” says Abuelita. “Ojala que venga la próxima vez. Mi Gorda siempre me alivia el alma.”

Of course she does. Score for you, Marla, ya rock star!

A plump woman in a white T-shirt and jeans appears at the bedroom door with a tray holding a bowl of soup and a tiny paper cup containing some pills and vitamins. She smiles at Mami and Tío Jaime. “Buenas.”

“Buenas,” say Mami and Tío Jaime.

“Señora Isabela, el almuerzo,” says the woman to Abuelita.

“Ah, sí,” says Abuelita, sitting up. “Quien come no muere.” Between spoonfuls of soup, Abuelita asks about Daddy. “Y cómo está el Salvador?”

I laugh to myself at how my father’s name in Spanish sounds like a country. The housekeeper wipes her chin.

“Bien, Mamita,” says Mami. “Se retiró.”

“Y cómo trabajó tan duro todos esos años! Un buen proveedor. Exactamente cómo tu padre.”

“Sí, Mamita,” says Mami, tearing up again. “El Salvador siempre ha sido un buen hombre. Como mi papá. No ve? Con tiempo, encontré un hombre verdadero.”

I can’t believe what I’m hearing. But I guess Mami’s bullshit about Daddy makes Abuelita happy.

“Sí mijal,” Abuelita tells Mami. Then she turns to Tío Jaime. “El tiempo arregla todo.”

Tío Jaime’s eyes fill with tears as he turns and goes back out into the dining room. I don’t know if anyone’s told Abuelita about Beatriz, but it doesn’t matter. Even from her bed, my grandmother has a daggered tongue where Tío Jaime’s concerned. My poor uncle. My poor cousin.

After covering Abuelita’s cheeks with kisses and theatrical crying and laughing all at the same time, Mami says we should be getting to our hotel.

“We’re here in Quito this week,” she tells Abuelita. “Next week, the mother of one of Sophia’s classmates invited us to Salinas.”

“Que rica que está la playa,” says Abuelita.

“Gracias, Mamita!” says Mami, kissing my grandmother on the cheek. “Vuelvo mañana, okay?”

I half smile at my grandmother. I know I’ll be back here tomorrow and every day until it’s time to meet up with Angie. I am counting the hours.

Mami dabs her eyes with a tissue as we leave my grandmother’s bedroom and join Tío Jaime in the dining room.

“Quieres champaña?” he asks my mom as he wipes his own tears with a yellowed handkerchief from his pants pocket. Enough gushing already. Seriously.

“Bueno,” says Mami through tight lips.

Tío Jaime throws open the doors of Abuelita’s china closet and removes a chipped wavy champagne glass.

“Aye, this one’s no good. Here, take mine.”

“No, gracias,” Mami says to her brother’s extended glass. I know what she’s thinking. Don’t treat me like that.

“You must come to my house,” says Tío Jaime. “Rita would love to see you.”

“We have to check into our hotel,” says Mami, knowing he has just told the biggest lie.

“What hotel?” he asks. “You must stay at my house. You’re only in Quito one week, Right?”

“Sí. But I wouldn’t want to bother Rita.” Mami leaves out “the master” which is what she calls my aunt whenever she talks to me about her.

“It’s no bother. And when do I get see you, or my beautiful niece?”

“Well, as long as it won’t become a problem.”

“It won’t.”

“Okay. I can cancel the hotel reservation no problem. I’ll say there’s been an emergency.”

I breathe a heavy breath. This is gonna be rough. Tío Jaime said it won’t be a problem for us to stay at his house, but even he must know that’s not true. I get the feeling he wants a break from the tension over the Beatriz situation and, for all I know, his wife’s bitchiness about it. I’ve never been to Beatriz’s house without her there. After all the heaviness this afternoon, I am dying to see Angie in Salinas.

Tía Rita sits in a white armchair in the living room and sips from a gold-rimmed peony-covered teacup in her lap. She smiles but doesn't get up when she sees Mami and me.

"Hola, hija," she says to me. Hello, my daughter is only an expression.

"Hola, Tía." I lean down to kiss her perfumed cheek.

She has highlighted her dark brown hair with blond streaks in contrast to the purplish blush on her cheekbones and bright magenta lipstick. Tía Rita's eyes are a shade of amber so similar to Tío Jaime's that someone who didn't know better might mistake them for brother and sister. Mami stands behind me and does not stoop to kiss my aunt. Instead, she nods and says, "Hola."

"Hola," replies Tía Rita, forcing a smile at Mami.

"Quieres un té?" Tío Jaime asks Mami.

"Bueno," says Mami before sitting down on the yellow velvet couch.

While my uncle bangs around pots and pans in the kitchen, Mami keeps her eyes focused on the grandfather clock whose pendulum thumps along with my heartbeat as I chew my nails.

After a minute, Mami grits her teeth at me. My aunt breaks the silence.

"Carmelita says my father visits her sometimes," she says in Spanish, referring to her other daughter, Beatriz's little sister. "On the day of her First Communion last year, the doorbell rang twice downstairs. I was upstairs showing guests where to leave their coats. My brother went downstairs to see who was at the door, but when he opened the door, there was no one there. Then the doorbell rang again. This time, Carmelita went downstairs in her dress like a little bride. We watched her from the top of the stairs as she opened the door and said, 'Pase Abuelo'."

I shiver as I think of the old dead grandfather visiting me that night.

Mami nods and turns her face to the window. "My father visits me too. In dreams, though."

Tía Rita nods. Abuelito wasn't too crazy about Rita either. Mostly because she was the source of his adored wife's pain. So it looks like Tío Jaime learned how to worship the love of his life, just as his father did. But no one, especially Mami, would ever admit it.

After a few minutes, Tío Jaime appears with a silver tray containing three more peony teacups, a plate of tiny croissants, and a small glass jar of what looks like orange-colored jam.

Mami takes a teacup from the tray and dips the tip of a croissant into the jar. "Mija Marla always remembers your *mermelada de naranjilla*," says Mami in Spanish before chomping on the croissant.

The next morning, we find Tío Jaime preparing breakfast in the kitchen.

"Buenos días, mijita," he calls out to me. The term mijita is painful to hear now that Beatriz is gone. The sadness in Tío Jaime's eyes radiates like a fever. I think I have the same one. I walk over to where he's mixing up a bowl of tutti frutti, the Ecuadorian fruit salad with the Italian name I've eaten on every vacation here. Beatriz used to pour the mixture of pineapples, oranges, and grapes over strawberry yogurt in a brandy glass. She was always so sophisticated. I sigh. Everything in this house aches with her absence.

Mami appears at the kitchen doorway.

"Hola ñaña," he says, putting down the bowl and pecking Mami on the cheek.

"Hi."

Tío Jaime says he's already brought Carmelita to school and is letting Tía Rita sleep in, given the angustia of recent weeks.

"Me imagino," says Mami. "Suerte que no tiene que levantarse para ir al trabajo."

"Yo nunca quise una mujer sacrificada," says Tío Jaime, frowning.

"Claro que no," says Mami, shrugging. Well, he certainly got his wish, Mami must be thinking.

Tío Jaime unties his apron and hangs it on the back of the kitchen door. He brings the bowl of tutti frutti over to the big table in the living room along with a block of Ecuadorian cheese that's like feta but chewier and more tart. I start to sit down in Beatriz's chair, which faces the window overlooking the street so she could always watch people passing by.

"Aye. Aquí no, mijita," says Tío Jaime, gently grabbing my arms.

"Por qué?" I ask, throwing his hands off me.

"Eh, es que el viento pase por la ventana en esta silla," he says, darting his eyes. "No quiero que te resfríes."

"Oh," is all I say before taking the seat next to Mami on the opposite side of the table.

Tío Jaime doesn't want me to catch a cold, but that's not all he's afraid I'll "catch." It's not like Beatriz has fucking leprosy. It's bad enough Beatriz has been "quarantined" in the mountains for liking girls. Jaime doesn't have to get all stupid with me back here in la ciudad de Quito. It's really getting hard for me to feel bad for him. It sucks to be at the mercy of imbeciles.

I can't enjoy the warm, sweet *bizcochos*, or biscuits, and the frothy *café con leche* in my sunny yellow mug with a barbed knot in my stomach. Maybe Mami shouldn't have canceled our hotel reservation. Watching her stir the sugar into her coffee, calmly, with her pinky poised in the air, it's like she's immune to her family's drama. Maybe by the time I'm her age, I'll be able to eat around these people with a clear gut.

"I've taken the week off from work so we can enjoy the city together," Jaime says, spooning some of the tutti frutti into a shallow glass bowl, which he passes to Mami.

"As long as it's not too much trouble."

"Of course it isn't. We could visit Mamá again this morning then have lunch in the city. Over the next few days, we could go to La Mitad del Mundo, El Quinche, El Panecillo. Wherever you like."

"Bueno. As long as Rita lets you go."

Tío Jaime huffs. "Can you please stop it already?"

Mami stuffs another *bizcocho* in her mouth, which will keep her quiet for a while. I'm certain now that our being here is only for Jaime's benefit. Rita couldn't care less and is doing a great job getting lost. I can't wait to see Angie.

Back at Abuelita's house, Mami and Tío Jaime lift her into the wheelchair by her bed and wheel her into the creaky wooden living room. Mami lays a gray wool blanket with a reclining lion and its cub on the front over her lap. The housekeeper has already combed Abuelita's hair into a smooth bun and helped her wash her face. One thing Marla always says that's true: our grandmother is impeccable. Mami and Jaime sink back into the hollow cushions of the green, faux-leather couch across from Abuelita's chair and start their usual simple questions and answers and decades-old stories.

I'm bored already. I never realized how little there is to do around here without Beatriz. This place is falling apart, no one bothers to fix it (maybe they're waiting for Mami, the "millionaire from New York," as she always jokes, to pay for repairs), and there's nobody my age to talk to anymore. And I'm over the "joy" of seeing my grandmother. I can't fake things to talk to her about like Marla can, so I tell everyone I'll be in the garden.

As I pass through the white-painted, open air corridor, I find my grandfather's piano in the corner room at the end facing the garden. Its ebony wood looks worn and warped and its keys are yellowed and caked with dust made sticky by the moisture from each passing rainstorm. I sit down on the bench before the keys and pick out a few chords. I can tell the piano hasn't been tuned in years because the keys give off strained, cracked notes when I tap them. I never took lessons like Beatriz, who would play for hours to our abuelito's delight. His favorite piece was a Chopin Nocturne, with its giggling trickles over the deeper, mournful notes that, for some reason, I always concentrated on more. The dank smell in this room is the scent of Beatriz's absence. The key dust sticks to my fingers like ashes. I pull my lips in to stop the tears that keep rising in my throat. I can't let Mami see me cry. She'd tell me to get over it, Beatriz isn't dead. But everyone sure as hell acts like she is.

After saying goodbye to Abuelita for the day, we pile into Jaime's pickup truck and head

to Latacunga for lunch. We stop at a restaurant called *Chugchucaras Sofia*, and Tío Jaime has me stand in front of it as he snaps a picture with Mami's disposable camera.

"Don't you like the name?" Mami asks me, frowning.

“Oh I love it,” I tell her, frowning back.

“Que’s esa cara?”

“It’s nothing. I’m fine,” I say, forcing a smile.

“Mm-hmm,” she says with narrowed eyes. “Make sure it stays that way. I didn’t spend money on this trip for you to ruin it *con esas muñecas*.”

“I said I’m fine.”

Mami nods and follows Tío Jaime into the restaurant. Inside, we order *chugchucaras*, a platter consisting of mini-empanadas, roasted pork, boiled hominy, and tostado, which is dry, toasted yellow corn. I wash down the tightness in my throat with an Inca Cola. A crackling flash of lightning and the rumble of thunder announce the torrent of rain that falls outside the window. There goes our trip to El Quinche. We’ll have to go tomorrow. I don’t mind, though. If I can’t cry, let it pour.

Back at the house, we find Tía Rita standing in the middle of the living room taking clothes from piles on the couch and the ironing board and placing them into an old Tango box that sits opened at her feet. Tangos were always Beatriz’s and my favorite chocolate-covered cream sandwich cookies that you find at every outdoor kiosk throughout the city. When I get closer to the box, my stomach drops—it’s filled with Beatriz’s embroidered blouses, pleated skirts, and wool stockings all stacked tightly together as in a soldier’s footlocker. Carmelita sits very close to the ironing board. She looks at me suspiciously and says nothing. I was never close to this tiny Rita-like creature who Beatriz often referred to as her parents’ surprise baby.

“Pero qué estás haciendo?” Tío Jaime asks Rita.

Rita looks at Mami first, then at me before answering Jaime. Hi to you too, Auntie Dear.

“Dando su ropa a la iglesia de San Francisco,” she says, shrugging. She’s giving Beatriz’s clothes away to the Church of St. Francis. Wow. She can’t even say her name.

“But maybe she’ll need at least a blouse,” he continues in Spanish, spreading his arms.

“She doesn’t need anything more than the uniform they gave her,” says Rita with fury now in her eyes.

“I just don’t understand why you have to give all of her clothes to the church! She’s not dead!”

“Padre Joselito blesses donors in front of the whole congregation at the masses throughout the week. That way, everyone, especially God Himself, can see we’re decent people.”

“Why do we have to prove anything to the congregation?”

Rita curls her magenta lips into a canine sneer.

“Because they all know your mother! She practically used to live in church when she could still walk! You thought she went there to pray when all she did was curse me! Curse our marriage and our kids and this house!”

Tío Jaime’s eye twitches on the right. I wonder if he’s about to cry.

“Now everyone is pointing at me for giving birth to a child with unnatural urges! So I banished my firstborn child! And your mother must be thrilled! And she will be thrilled till the day she dies. Ah, but she won’t die like my mother did when I was only twenty-five! She’ll live as long as Abrahán. And why? Because yerba mala nunca muere! Weeds never die! But you know the sick justice of it all, Jaime?” she screams. “My unnatural daughter looks just like her!”

“Enough!” he says, throwing Beatriz’s chair down at the table. Its back splits down the middle as though struck by lightning.

Carmelita screams and jumps off her stool. In that moment, the iron teeters off the board and lands on her toe. She screams and Tío Jaime immediately scoops her up and rushes her to the kitchen sink. He holds her foot under the faucet, and runs cold water over it. Rita stands in the doorway wiping tears from her face with the back of her hand as she watches her husband and daughter. After a few minutes, Carmelita stops crying. Tío Jaime soothes her with murmuring reassurances and strokes her dark hair before brushing past Rita in the kitchen doorway. We watch in silence as he sits down on the couch and rocks Carmelita until, from pain, shock, or fear, she falls asleep.

Rita huffs, kisses Carmelita on the forehead, and hoists the Tango box off the floor. She lugs it to the door but before she leaves, she looks over her shoulder at Jaime. Unbroken tears shine in her exhausted eyes. “God sees my good intentions already. Carmelita’s all right. He’ll pardon me, for everything, in the end.” She turns to me without even a glance at Mami. “Que Dios te bendiga, mijita. Que te guarde.”

I blink back my tears and nod. I want to thank Tía Rita for asking God to bless and protect me, but Mami would slap me. Maybe Rita was really thinking of Beatriz. I can’t help feeling sorry for her.

Tío Jaime shakes his head. He wipes tears from his eyes and says nothing as Rita leaves the house.

Mami stares at her little brother and purses her lips. As spiteful as Mami can be about Rita, she can’t be enjoying this. “It’s no good for your daughter to see you two fighting,” she tells Jaime in a tone she would use with a four-year-old after a tantrum. I wish she and Daddy followed that advice.

On the last day of the week, we check out of our hotel. Then it’s time to bid farewell to Abuelita. Mami breaks into tears before kissing her mother one last time at the old house.

“Ahora no digo adiós, mi Mamita querida! Solamente doy la bendición!”

“Chau, mi negrita,” says Abuelita, smiling in her bed.

Then Mami turns to me. “Kiss your abuelita!”

I lean down and kiss my grandmother’s hand.

“La bendición, Abuelita.”

“Hasta luego, mi Flaca.”

I grin at my grandmother. I don’t know the next time I’ll see her. We will never be as close as she and Marla are, but there are things I can’t have. This trip has proven that too many times.

When Tío Jaime hugs me, I whisper in his ear to please tell Beatriz I love her the next time he calls her. He nods and sniffs before turning to say goodbye to Mami. He places a jar of Rita’s naranjilla marmalade in Mami’s hands to bring home to Marla. At least that’s something nice from my aunt. Then Jaime puts his arms around Mami and holds her tight. This time she hugs him back, pressing her lips together hard so she won’t cry. I imagine the way they were as kids, playing and chasing each other around my grandparents’ house when it was still solid enough to hold their pounding footsteps. They resist remembering that there was a time when they loved each other. Tío Jaime couldn’t belong to Abuelita, or to Mami, forever. Mami doesn’t want Tío Jaime to see the tears in her eyes, but I wish she would just give in already.

The scent of diesel fuel spews from the carburetor pipes of trucks that drive past. After ten minutes, the bus pulls up. From the cracked open windows, I smell more diesel clouds floating over the tin roof shacks. Diesel will be the scent of Quito to me forever. It is the smell of death above faded Coca Cola signs painted on the white-washed walls of roadside shacks. Diesel is the smell of childhood’s death.

I leave my sunglasses on for the whole bus ride to Salinas, trying to catch the tears before they seep down my cheeks and Mami yells at me for being ungrateful.



une bière à Jokers

Addison Hoggard

J'ai commandé une bière,
c'était Tom qui me l'a servi :

T'es Tom ?
Ouais.
C'est un nom plutôt américain.
Ouais.
T'es qui toi ?
Mon nom n'existe pas.
C'est une blague ?
Non. J'suis des États-Unis.
Je le sais
mais
ton nom
c'est quoi ?
Ça n'existe pas en français.
Je te donne
un nom français
avec ta bière.
C'est quoi ce nom ?
Ça n'existe.

Wasn't it then that I stopped
existing in any language?

f/a/c/e/s (#1)

Simon Brown

Face
& à
in la
init nuit
une f a c e o f nuit
that
isnt
n'est pas ta f a c e
mais
f a c e d e
voice d'aspérités
brune roughrough
pâleur & voice
qui dontalk
qui nomore
parla
by the f a c e
&
a u s o l
uneprojection d e f a c e
donttalk
qui
n'est que by the f a c e &
qui n'est pas?
f a c e

when I mourn, I do so in Spanish

Adelina Molina

Dime, the bright light at the end of the tunnel is it really the end, or just another beginning. Another birth canal. A different ending.

I could say I lost her all at once *pero eso no es cierto. La perdi poco a poco.*

Sus ojos fueron cambiando, oscureciendo. Me la quitaron entre llantos y suspiros.

Que vaina. My innocence started in blankets, and I am fairly certain she ended in blankets as well.

I imagine the humidity, the contractions, her body yelling it was time for my birth, the beads of sweat on Mami's brow. On the day I was born, when the body said "Flow, *ya es hora*," I swam against it. Instead of going down the birth canal, I held tight to the comfort of my mother's heartbeat, pressing my little body upwards against the inside of her ribs. That was my first act of rebellion or the solidifying of my innocence, I am still trying to understand. After hours of labor, the concerned doctors made a clean incision, taking me from a place I did not want to leave, a first gasp of air, a first cry, and then blankets.

I lost my innocence the way you lose your favorite yellow crayon, it's overused wrapper torn back, worn down wax slowly disappearing each time she was used. Her skin peeled back like a mango, her soft sweet meat pierced by sharp teeth, her life dripping down chins.

Papi left to Puerto Rico when I was five. He married a nice Puerto Rican lady and lived in New York before he left. I remember drinking hot chocolate with him and making a 500-piece Lion King Puzzle on the dining room table. We would wrap the couch cushions in a blanket and make a bed for my visit. I remember him taking me home. Sometimes I would walk alongside his 6 foot 3 frame chewing on the Toffifay candy that was a staple of our visits. If he was taking me home late, he would carry me like the Raggedy Ann doll in the Enchanted Square cartoon I used to watch on repeat on VHS. When Papi left, anxiety was a poison that grew deep in my marrow. I learned the language of, "Please, don't leave me."

I lost her in pieces. The way you lose socks, or strands of hair, or even baby teeth, slowly over time, until they are gone, replaced by an unrecognizable otherness.

The thing about truths is that most of the time people do not want to hear them. I was thirteen-years old when I sat on my Tia Yeya's bed, fumbling the edge of the blanket between thumb and forefinger, words escaping my lips as though running from fire, chest rising up and down like smoke signals, eyes blaring fire alarms, detailing how my cousin would push my head under the blanket and between legs. Maybe that's why my tia didn't believe me. Because the thing about truths is that most of the time people do not want to hear them.

I never buy dark furniture. It reminds me of the men who sit behind the desks at the 13th Precinct in Manhattan. The wood is a dark cherry, and behind the wood are men that were prying into something I did not want to share. Men that could be just like the man who had raped me.

I was fourteen. I didn't scream. I thought if anyone ever touched me against my will, I would scream. I said *no*. Repeatedly, but I didn't scream. When he didn't listen, I turned my face to the side and waited for him to finish. When it was all over, when he had let me go, I turned around on his bed as far as I could get from him. He hugged me and said, "I love you." I did not know what love meant. I am still not sure I know what true love between lovers looks like. I went home, showered, threw away my bloody panties, and cried.

I don't really remember my mother's reaction after *enterándose*, other than, "*Por eso es que has estado llorando tanto.*"

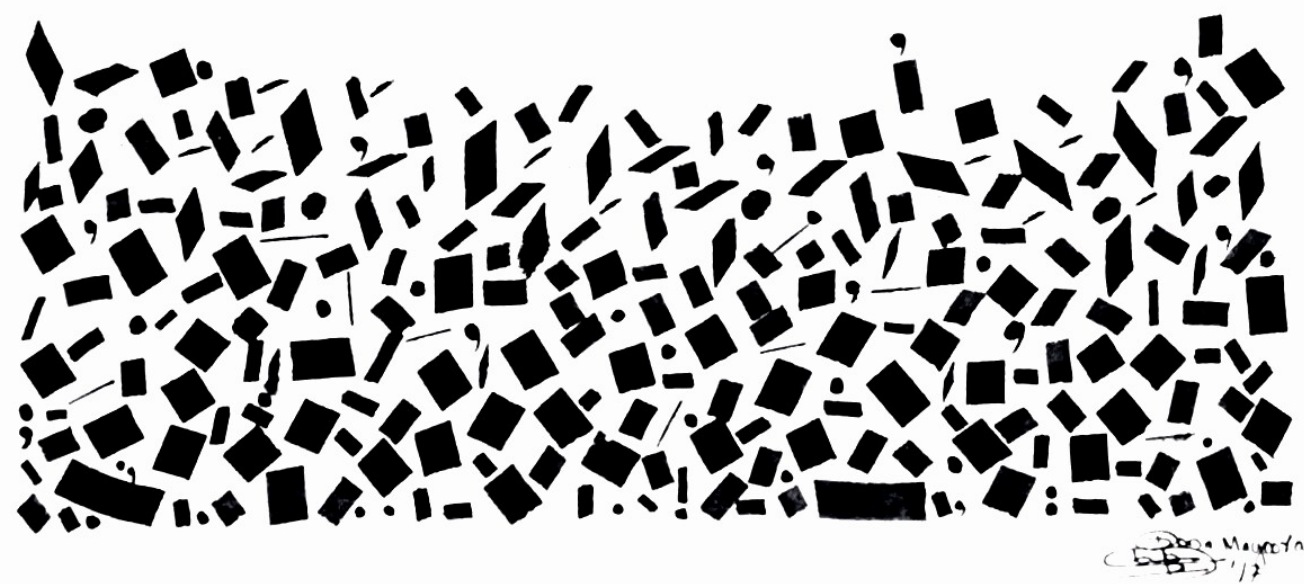
I remember her determined face when she dragged me from school to the Precinct to file a police report that I did not want to file. Her reaction before knowing, running her hands through my hair as I cried in bed, was the comfort I wanted.

When Papa died, I flew to my grandparents house with my family. A three-bedroom home in *La Sabána*. When my viejito's body arrived, I only remember the hustle and screams of everyone directing the men to bring his casket into the house headfirst and to take him out of the house feet-first after the wake. My grandfather was laid to rest in a mausoleum, a small city of my dead ancestors, buildings made of tomb on top of tomb. I remember my uncles banging at the casket with a hammer before they shut Papa's body away with a concrete slab. My mother and grandmother's screams still echo in my dreams. I couldn't stay the *nueve días de luto*, because when you are second-generation transplant in New York, mourning is a privilege that most cannot afford. But the five days I was there, I spent being held by family and friends in our village, ugly crying until my eyes swelled like balloons. I could only see the world behind a veil of tears.

When my Titi Miriam passed away two years later, my heart shattered into pieces that I cannot put back together the same way. It was in December. I had held her hand the day before she passed, and I couldn't bring myself to go to her funeral. Instead, I took the day off, stayed home, played Hector Lavoe and Whitney Houston, her favorites, and cried while cooking too much food for no one in particular.

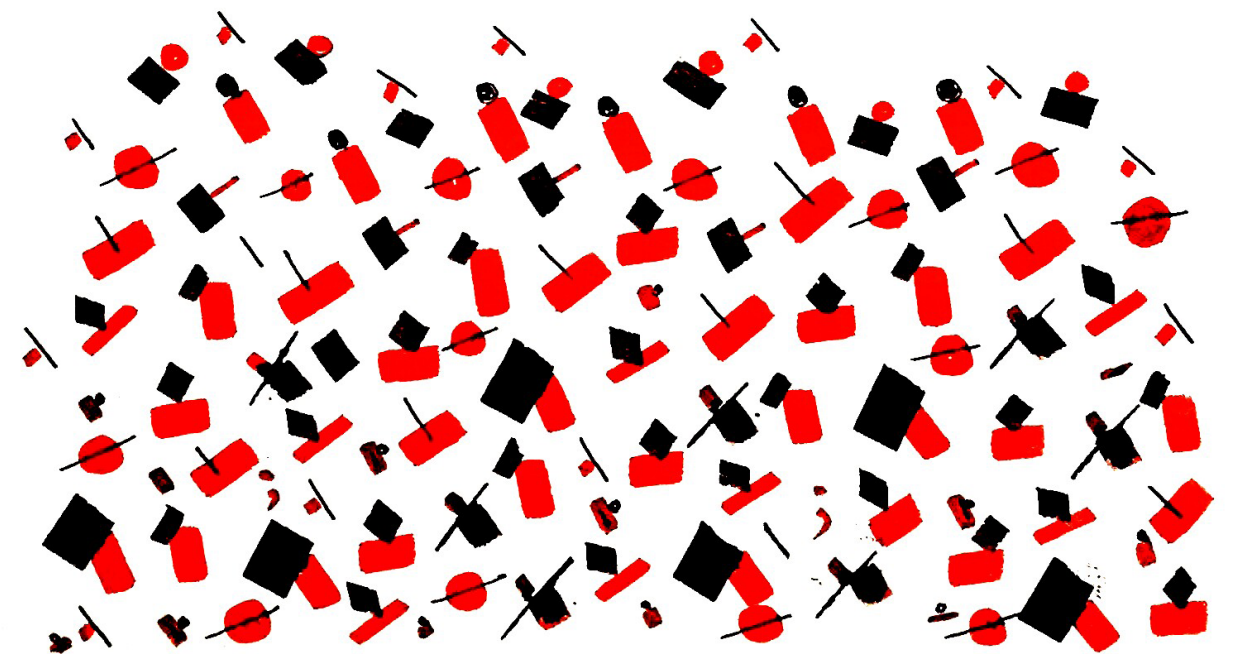
deconstructed poem

Dona Mayoora



deconstructed bilingual poem

Dona Mayoora



Dona Mayoora
1/7

Эх, Яблочко

Mark Budman

Эх, яблочко, да red delicious
Ситуация quite suspicious.
I have always said, будут слушать.
If they do того не придушат.

hair, from Archilochus fr.30-31

translated by KA Masters

She relished the feel of the myrtle blossom in her fingers
ἔχουσα θαλλὸν μυρσίνης ἐτέρπετο
(or maybe it was rose?)
ρόδῃς τε καλὸν ἄνθος, ἢ δέ οἱ κόμη
as her hair cascaded down her bare shoulders
ὤμους κατεσκίαζε καὶ μετάφρενα.
and down to the small of her back.



temporal

Edu Barreto

storm

translated by Korbin Jones

Temporal

No para de llover
y yo, acá, enredado
entre las cosas que nunca te dije.

Tu ausencia martilla los recuerdos,
se esconde en el arbusto,
mastica el aire con olor a tierra
y a regresos.

La luna también cae con la lluvia.
Aprovecho para interrogarla.
Le pregunto si te creció el pelo,
si seguís mordiendo el papel,
si apretás la almohada pensando en mis brazos.

Llueve despacio.
Las promesas chorrean de la boca.
Los cristales mojados.
Tus ojos en cada charco.

Escampó.
Pero dentro de mí
sigue lloviendo . . .

Storm

It won't stop raining
and here I am, tangled
in the things I never told you.

Your absence plagues these memories,
hides itself in the bush,
chews air that smells of dirt
upon return.

The moon also falls with the rain.
I make the most of it by interrogating her.
I ask her if you grew out your hair,
if you keep biting the paper,
if you squeeze the pillow thinking of my arms.

It pours out slowly.
The promises trickling from her mouth.
The wet crystals.
Your eyes in each puddle.

It cleared up.
But inside me
it still rains . . .

lembrar

Addison Hoggard

Mexican food in Paris.
You told me you'd never
tasted yucca,
but you realized you
just knew it by a different name:
mandioca. To you, a flower
for cooking.

“I promise, you'll love Mexican food.”

“Will you always love me?”
tears tainted the tortilla,
picante too much
for your palate, a shade off color.
Terrified of the Atlantic.

I promised I could,
not that I would.

Later, rats by the Seine.
We watched them run by
our feet in the cold. We sat there,
mesmerized by their tininess.

“How do you pronounce *La Seine* in English?”

“I say it like Sin.”

“Abba said it like Sane.”

You told me a joke about a business man
who swam in the river
because he was *in-Seine*.
It made sense to me.

The moon emptying itself into the water.
We poured saliva between
mouths on the Pont Saint-Michel,
you said:

“Eu tô assustado que nós nos perderemos.”

“I'm sorry you didn't like the Mexican food.”

I wondered how those tears tasted.

agora alto

Addison Hoggard

Tão alto

you whisper.
I wonder
how to say the
view is beautiful.

Vai chover

you point.
The clouds
are obvious
and spiteful.

Tem medo

you kiss.
Lisboa colder
than Paris,
shiver.

Te amo pra sempre

you utter.
I wonder
how to say I
love you for now.

La línea estatal Un estado sublime The state line
A sublime stage
and the sensation the worldmound has
y la sensación de que el mundo ha
quedado deliciosamente excluído been deliciously excluded
Al lado horror y belleza
separados All added
horror and beauty
set off
por el agua jabonosa y dos charcos soapy water
depth charges
de refrescos diluidos con vinagre
in soda diluted conned by vinegar
Nos servían el café tibio No one served us nibs
y aunque of coffee and de
spite
fuéramos jodidos furry-moss-hoed and fucked
no lo aceptábamos
we wouldn't have accepted.
De un lado amarillo y del otro On one laid yellow and on the other
también as well
Hace falta diálogo What's missing is dialogue
entre los perros de allá y de acá between parrots
from there and from here
pero impasible yet impassible
Siempre el miedo Always the fear
a caer dentro del hueco y no saber of coiling into the wax and not knowing
subirse de nuevo how to subvert again
El original signo Original sin under the spell
bajo el hechizo de la elegancia of elegance
ha perdido su significado has lost its signified
en esta torre de marfil in this ivory tower
Pero el mundo Pears in the postcard world
de la tarjeta postal posee
su horror propio: possess their horror proper
el egoísmo aterrador the terrifying egoism
de la exclusión excludes

EDITORS' NOTE:

The following visual translation
is meant to be viewed
as a GIF image.

Flip back and forth between
the following two page-spreads
to experience the work as intended.



WINTER GEAR

two poems from The Book of Clay

by Blanca Varela, translated by Lisa Allen Ortiz

El niño se miró al espejo y vio que era un monstruo.
Misterios de la luz. Según el cristal en que se mira
nacer o morir. Las viejas imágenes se oxidan.

The child looked at himself in the mirror
and saw a monster. Such mysteries light makes.
In glass one sees birth or death. So the old visions oxidize.

Al pelar un fruto abruma el misterio de la carne.
Los dientes rasgan un continente oscuro, los
sentidos descubren la fragilidad de cualquier
límite. Palpar la imagen, escuchar la sangre. Oír su
sagrado perfume.

Peeling a fruit one is swamped by the mystery
of flesh. Teeth scrape a dark continent, the senses
discover the fragility of a boundary. Feel an image, listen
to blood. Hear its hallowed perfume.

Eco tras eco desenterrar la infancia. Esperar
con paciencia que el recuerdo destile en nuestro
oído su jerga de aguas negras.

Echo upon echo exhumes childhood. Wait patiently
as memory distills its babble of dark waters
in the canals of our ears.

~

El dolor entre dos paredes ya no es el dolor.
Ponemos el día y la noche entre nosotros. Todo
nos une y nos separa. Tanto olvido es otra vez
descubrirse, evitarse, girar en redondo. Estrella
invisible fuera de órbita. Órbita que fue o es la
memoria. Lado de sombra, la memoria crece y
se devora, y la luz está cerrada y vacía como un
estuche inútil donde alguna vez algo brilló hasta
consumirse.

Pain between two walls is no longer pain. Let's
put the day and the night between us. All that
unites and separates us. So much forgetting
described and evaded, such spinning. An invisible
star leaves its orbit, an orbit that was or is the
memory. On the shaded side, memory grows and
devours itself, its brilliance is closed and empty
like a broken cabinet that held something once
blazing.

Extrañeza de la propia mano, la que toco. La ajena
mía. Eso existe. Zona inexplorada de la carne
íntima. Otra tierra en la tierra. Eso en la soledad
del cuerpo tendido bajo la noche.

The surprising touch of one's own hand. The
otherness of me. This exists. Unexplored place of
intimate flesh. Another earth inside the earth. The
body's solitude unfolded in the dark.

"I started translating Varela because translating is a manner of close reading. I wanted Varela's poems to move around my mouth and throat so I could understand them. They go through my eyes as Spanish-language poems and come out my throat and fingers in English. Feels like carrying a wildcat across a river. As if I knew what was best for the wildcat, which I do not. Translating is an act of absolute hubris and soul-simmering humility. I feel small when I'm translating. I feel blown-up and enormous, the size of nothingness." - Lisa Allen Ortiz



mameloshn (or mama löschen) / mother tongue (or to erase mama)

Eli Binkovitz

I'm looking for my tongue. I've never seen it. It's the prize
in a scavenger hunt, in a circle.
Start in Kafka's maze, in Prague.
Go through Celan's shibboleth, called
from the smoke of Germany into the ruins of Spain.
Next, Ginsberg's obscene Communist exultation
runs its fingers over all the privates of America,
peering into Chicago and its privatization
of bodies and mud where Borzutzky writes life into a body
made of the mud, and the mud-sunk bodies.

This body made of mud with other bodies inside it carries you.
Is this "*die Fremde der Heimat?*"

Sunk in the mud of symbols, each hanging from an umlaut,
my tongue searches all over the century for its mother,
barters for petrol and a vehicle to search for its mother,
leafs through barracks of mothers in search of its mother.

Speaking is a subtractive procedure I cannot do
until I've pulled each tongue from my mouth,
catalogued, tagged, pinned and mounted it.
This is anathema to Yiddish
consciousness, a stream crowded with tongues
fish-wriggling tongues babbling in all tongues,
leaping as only the unlabeled can leap.

I hoped to have a heart-to-heart with my tongue,
that awkward Jewish animal living under the roof
of my mouth, but the symbols I keep shoveling in
turn out to be another obsolete currency
like the deutschmark. Deutsch marks
my tongue, motherless. *Fartaytcht.*

Some of us remember before our tongues were cut out.
These ones can make their mouth shape like how it did before,
and sometimes others of us can even decipher them.
Mine was first cut out before I was born.
I learned to fashion new tongues out of various materials
but they were clumsy. I got by,
mostly by having symbols falling out of my mouth,
which I saved. When my great-grandfather died
I didn't know how to say his name aloud.

A dry papier-mâché tongue clicks against
my twenty-eight teeth like typewriter keys.
Teeth for original letters, and then the vowels,
and the mutations that only live in Yiddish. No crowns,
a jaw cannot accommodate an entire Torah scroll.

Sometimes people tried to give back the tongues
but they were broken or they were holy
or it was one tongue we had to take turns speaking with.
I wish I had a tongue to tell you about
the times it was cut out, and the currency they used
as a blade. They? We.

We cut out our tongues and the tongues of our children.
They became currency, we traded them for more *Fremde*.
Our children want to return their *Fremde* for a refund,
to get their tongues back, but there aren't enough left for everyone
and there's no telling which came from which mouth.
They jumble together. Tongues: tied, muted and limp.
Missing. Broken.

Our children want to untie them, pull at the knots, put them back
into their mouths. They try to speak with the tongues
their parents never came back for, nearly understand each other.

Some *fallen azoy*, in love with a tongue,
almost believe it to be theirs.

mother tongue

Manivillie Kanagasabapathy

Tamil.. Taa mihl.. Thamizh...T(h)amil?
my mother's tongue,
the language by which
she was given to my father.
The word I am still trying to understand
As I search within it.

Kuṭumpam....Kudumpam.. Koo dumpam... Ku...
Broken words echo with memories lost
trying to come together
creating a new whole,
fractured pieces of jigsaw families,
pounded into place.

Nāadu...Naduuu...Eelam...Kaṇaṭā.
Sites
where I began,
was found,
lost,
reclaimed.
Spaces
where life is lived
in between the margins of
identities.

Enṇai...En...NO...Nāṇ..Nā?...ṇ?Nee?
Pieces of me
keep getting lost in you.
Leaving me with times
when I only see myself
in opposition to you,
where I find me,
in your omissions.

Tamil...Thamizh? English? Tamilish
my forgotten tongue
Created by the middle,
words to capture two hearts,
a history told in one voice,
articulated in different symbols.
Scripts and symbols,
trying to tell me
the same story.

Tamil and disputed words used:

- Thamizh: There is a debate about the correct phonetical spelling with the “th” and “zh” being the main point of debate (Thanks, Sathya)
- Kuṭumpa: Family
- Nāadu: Country
- Kaṇaṭā: Canada (Tamil Pronunciation)
- Eelam: Eelam is a proposed independent state that Tamil is in Sri Lanka
- Enṇai: Me
- En: My
- Nāṇ: I
- Nee: You
- Tamilish: Tamil typed in English



diggings of a retired writer (escavações de um escritor aposentado)

translated by Desirée Jung (original text by Iacyr Anderson Freitas)

**Y aquel mar, que se mueve a vuestro lado,
Es la promesa no cumplida de una
Resurrección.**

Alfonsina Storni

O primeiro susto se deu ao verificar as suas anotações de leitura num velho volume de Alfonsina Storni. Volume que ele, com toda a certeza, jamais havia lido. Folheando as páginas amarelecidas e bolorentas, constatou que aquelas eram, The first fright happened when he verified his reading notes in an old volume of Alfonsina Storni. Volume that he, with all certainty, had never read. Flipping through the yellowed and mouldy pages, he noticed that, undoubtedly, those sem dúvida, as suas anotações. De próprio punho, com o mesmo lápis rombudo de sempre. O problema é que - escavando a memória com as unhas, martelando-a contra seus próprios ossos - não se lembrava de, um momento sequer, ter were his notes. From his own hand, with the same blunt pencil of always. The problem is that – digging his memory with his nails, hammering it against his own bones – he couldn’t remember, not for a single moment, having looked over se debruçado sobre aquele livro. that book.

Mas não podia negar que o tinha saboreado. Palavra por palavra. Lá estava a sua letra, o seu modo peculiar de demarcar as passagens relevantes, os seus obtusos pontos de exclamação, tudo muito bem espalhado através de diversas pá- But he couldn’t deny having savored it. Word by word. There it was: his letter, his peculiar way of demarcating relevant passages, his obtuse exclamation points, all very well spread out through many pages. Still dizzy and frightened, ginas. Ainda tonto e assustado, sem compreender direito o que se passava, começou a procurar na estante outros títulos que, ao que se lembrava, decerto não havia lido. E seria assim difícil de descrever o seu sobressalto - aquela fila inter- without understanding rightly what had happened, he began searching on the shelf for other titles that, from what he remembered, he certainly hadn’t read. It would be thus difficult to describe his startle – that unstoppable line of question minável de interrogações -, a sua surpresa ao se deparar, em quase todos os tais exemplares, com o mesmo rol de rasuras e pequenos comentários: com que meticulosa aplicação ele também os tinha lido! marks – and his surprise when encountering, in almost all such copies, the same list of erasures and short commentaries: with what meticulous effort he had also read them!

Sozinho no meio do escritório empoeirado, imaginou, sorrindo, que o tempo tinha posto para funcionar, na sua cabeça já um tanto cansada do pastoreio das palavras, uma delicada máquina de desler. Qual uma borracha invisível que, aos Alone in the middle of the dusty office, he imagined, smiling, that time had put into work in his mind, already very tired from the pasture of words, an un-reading machine. Like an invisible erasure that, gradually, started to wipe off older poucos, fosse apagando da sua lembrança as obras mais antigas. Ou, melhor dizendo, mais antigamente lidas. Método incômodo e inusitado esse, mas que possuía pelo menos o incontestável mérito de lhe devolver, frescas e vivas, agitan- works from his memory. Or, better saying, formerly read. Such unusual and bothersome method, but that had at least the incontestable merit of returning, fresh and alive, agitating in the virgin lime of a lost uniqueness, some readings done do-se na cal virgem do ineditismo perdido, algumas leituras feitas há muito. Apesar de todo o desconforto, do pasmo que crivara de zeros o seu passado, poderia deixar, afinal, de comprar novos livros. “Tudo tem seu lado bom.” Seis mil a while back. Despite all his discomfort, the awe that sieved his past with zeros, he could stop, finally, buying new books. “Everything has a good side.” Six thousand volumes – that was his library – were enough, and with enough room, for volumes - essa era a sua biblioteca - bastavam, e com boa folga, para um belo retorno. Completo e sem máculas. Os anos que lhe restavam de vida - ainda não era um velho - poderiam ser muito bem aplicados na releitura de livros que, para a beautiful return. Complete and without stains. The years left in his life – he was not an old man yet – could be well applied in the rereading of books that, for him, became newer each day. ele, tornavam-se mais inéditos a cada dia.

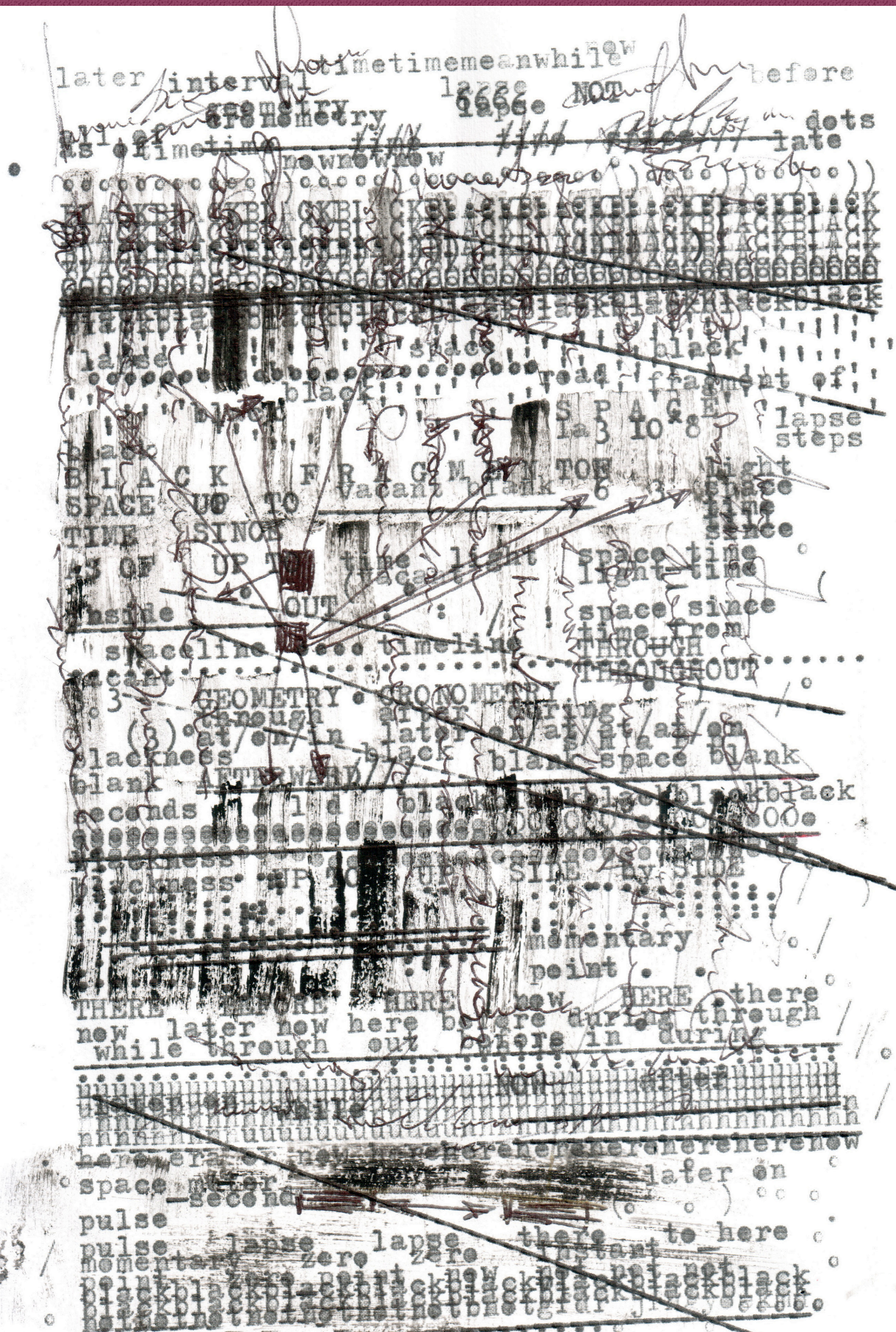
Foi quando, brincando de si para si, teve a súbita certeza de que o tempo guardava, na boca sempre escassa dos viventes, o sabor inominável das primeiras coisas. Pouco importassem os motivos. Haveria de pulsar com renovado brilho, It was when, playing, he had the sudden certainty that time kept, on the often scarce mouth of the living, the unnameable flavor of the first things. Little mattered the motives. It would have to pulse with renovated shine, day in, day out, mais dia, menos dia, o ardor arcaico da origem. Era esse o sumo, o condimento da própria vida. “Toda uma metafísica poderia ser construída à sombra dessa idéia”, pensou, “preciso anotá-la”. Radiante, já que andava órfão de achados, sem the archaic ardor of origins. That was the juice, the condiment of life itself. “An entire metaphysics could be constructed on the shadow of such idea,” he thought, “I have to write it down.” Radiant, since he was already orphan of findings, conseguir escrever uma linha sequer, levantou-se para procurar seu caderno de apontamentos. No meio do caminho, no entanto, antes que botasse os olhos no caderno, foi agarrado pelo neto que acabara de chegar de viagem. De quebra, without being able to write a single line, he got up to search for his notebook. In the middle of his way, however, before he could place his eyes on the notebook, he was grabbed by his grandson who had just arrived from a trip. In addition, teve também de dar atenção ao filho e a nora, já que desde muito não os via. Entre um afazer e outro, acabou se esquecendo de anotar a tal “grande idéia” naquele dia, deixando-a escapar de seus olhos. he had also to give attention to his son and daughter in law, since he hadn’t seen them in a while. Between an affair and another, he ended up forgetting to make note of such “great idea” on that day, letting it slip from his eyes.

Dois meses depois, ao sair de um consultório médico, lembrou-se do bendito achado. Era um verdadeiro consolo resgatá-lo ali, no meio do trânsito engarrafado e do calor terrível daquele fim de tarde. Procurou um pedaço de papel. Não Two months later, when leaving a doctor’s office, he remembered such findings. It was a true consolation to rescue it there, in the middle of a traffic jam and the terrible heat at the end of that afternoon. He searched for a piece of havia. Revirou os bolsos e a carteira. Nada. “Não posso me perder dessa idéia”, disse em voz alta, “tenho de anotá-la assim que chegar em casa”. Estava feliz por resgatar do limbo a chama que lhe permitiria - quem sabe? - acender um novo paper. None. He turned his pockets inside out. Nothing. “I can’t lose this idea,” he said in high voice, “I have to write it down as soon as I get home.” He was happy to rescue from the limbo the flame that would allow him – who knows – livro. A chama que nascera exatamente do esquecimento de outros livros, e que enfim, depois de ser também esquecida, voltava para lhe dizer que sua memória ainda sabia colher da terra o essencial. Que nem tudo estava perdido. Olhou, to sparkle a new book. The flame that was born from the forgetting of other books, and that, finally, after having been forgotten as well, returned to tell him that his memory still knew how to collect the essential from the earth. That not com um calor estrangeiro, a noite que já começava a escalar o dorso desolado dos relógios. “Não posso me perder dessa idéia”, sussurrou ainda. Tocado pelo bafo daquela lembrança, agarrando-se palmo a palmo aos edifícios, o anoitecer everything was lost. He looked, with a foreign heat, the night that already began to climb the desolate back of the clocks. “I can’t lose myself from this idea,” he still whispered. Touched by the mold of that memory, grabbing inch by inch lhe pareceu mais belo. Ele sentia-se pleno, em paz com o mundo, surpreendendo assim, sem pressa, o lume de um azul que não fugia. Era quase uma criança então. “Não posso...”, voltou a insistir. E se esqueceu. onto the buildings, the nightfall appeared more beautiful to him. He felt full, in peace with the world, surprising thus, without hurry, a blue light that didn’t escape. He was almost a child then. “I can’t...”, he insisted again. And forgot.

studies on asemic interferences

on (and within) concrete structures #7

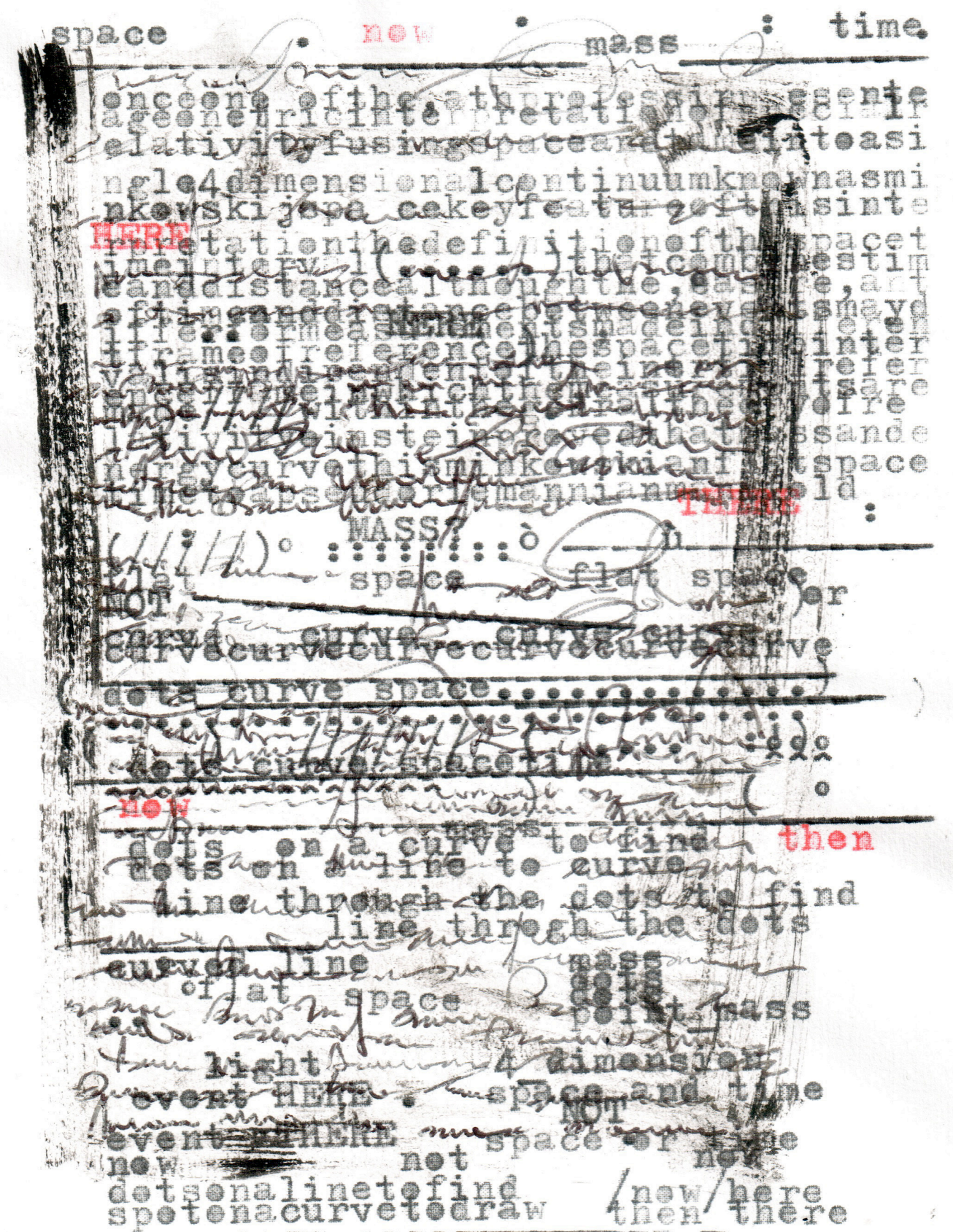
Federico Federici



studies on asemic interferences

on (and within) concrete structures #8

Federico Federici



guts for lunch: tragicomedy in three acts

translated by David Shames

GUTS FOR LUNCH Tragicomedy in three acts

Original work by Tina Escaja and collabor@tors
based on the short story “Bola Luna” by Tina Escaja
Translated from Spanish by David Shames

Minimalist set. Three spaces within a town market. The location of the three spaces will rotate or alternate throughout the play:

1. Stall within an indoor marketplace displaying artistic collaborations for sale instead of meat, poultry or offal. Hanging from above are works of art which will be given to “customers” as payment in exchange for their troubles, disclosed in either poetry or prose. The artwork alludes to the theme of the play: guts for lunch, *de tripas corazón*, and the art is on sale for the audience, so the price corresponding to each piece will be listed in the program. Depending on the offer, there can be two or three copies of each work. Among the hanging works of art and on the counter will be reproductions of Goya’s black paintings, with an emphasis on relevant selections from “Disasters of War” (*Desastres de la guerra*) and the well-known “Saturn Devouring his Son” (*Saturno devorando a su hijo*). There also could be a few of the illustrations from the classic *Alice in Wonderland*, like the first two from chapter IV (Giant Alice inside the house; and trying to catch the rabbit).

2. Dressing room, with a chair to leave clothes on and a full length mirror.

3. Small bar with a couple stools, if possible swivel stools.

CHARACTERS

GREGORIA (GOYA): Young store clerk at a poultry, tripe and offal shop.

JAIME: Bar waiter

MOTHER: Alicia’s mother. Middle age.

IRENE: Young store clerk at a fish shop.

EXTRA 1

EXTRA 2

EXTRA 3

The extras will play different roles throughout the play: acolytes, customers, voices, Jaime, etc.

ACT I

Scene 1.

Dressing room. Goya stands upright, like a doll, she’s half dressed. She is facing the audience, her monologue is directed at them. Two acolytes dressed in black arrive from different parts of the stage and proceed to dress her in her work uniform: red sweater and white apron. Then her clogs. Her street clothes sit folded on the chair. The mirror behind her captures a reflection of the entire action. The movements are meticulous and measured and evoke the ritual of dressing of the bullfighters before they enter the ring. Goya speaks while they dress her.

GOYA: Another morning. Another sunrise. Everything repeated, disjointed, absolutely identical. The world repeated and circular. The circle gets smaller, squeezing me, and I’m left without air, with my abdomen hard and exposed like an absurd insect lying on its back, without air. They call me Gregoria, or Goya if you want, it was my grandmother’s name and the name of my grandmother’s grandmother. Everything repeated and identical like a bad dream. They call me Goya and I sell tripe and guts, guts for lunch, *de tripas corazón*. (*Listing*) Carcasses for making stock, rabbits for roasting, lamb heads with a dazed look in their eyes, veal liver, tripe, prairie oysters, lamb fries, ham and cheese rolls, savory pastries filled of prunes, raisins, pine nuts and bacon, pineapple and peach filling, fillings of dreams in bulk, small portions of hope, everything and corpses. (*Absurdly*). This waking up early, makes one talk crazy...It makes you an idiot, it makes you detached and ridiculous like a marionette, like an unwelcome insect. (*Emphatic*) *Mensch muss seinen Schlaf haben!* People need to sleep, they need a break from their troubles and inner turmoil which always triumph over their spirit, especially if you don’t have much, if you’re unable to obtain or find any. Spirit lost among the cornflowers, in the streets, in the litter-strewn corners, in literal debts and in the other kind, in the lack of options, in the sort of demands that they make of you without asking, demands that are dead ends, no way out. A whole generation of shortages and debts, a generation of unresolved troubles, of unemployment, of stagnation. And here I am, having barely slept, another morning. Another sunrise. Everything repeated, disjointed, absolutely identical. (*Lecturing again*) “Lack of sleep can compromise your immune system.” Studies indicate that if you do not sleep enough, you will become an idiot, you will get sick, you will expose yourself to the virus of irrationality. Wikipedia says so, and also says that astronauts experience imbalances from the lack of natural light, which affects their senses, their circadian rhythms, and they get delirious (*She slowly lifts one of her legs, as if she was in space, but without changing her position*), trying in vain to move forward on the scarred landscape of the moon. (*Reciting.*) “And I venture out from the ship to the limitless/space/while the dust/smelling of shattered metal, of explosive will,/and the redundant night/reflect/each other.” This is a poem. I think it’s called “Infinite and woman.” First one leg; then the other, but always staying in the same place, never making it anywhere else. This impossible stubbornness of being and never leaving yourself. Especially if you are looking out at an inert landscape through space helmet. Yeah, that, a lack of dreams or delusions, maybe lucidity. I don’t know how long I’ve been trapped inside this time capsule, without light, without dreams, without a way out, waiting for my turn.

The acolytes have finished dressing her, and Goya turns toward the mirror. She adjusts her hair a bit, checks that everything is in order, but suddenly she notices something on her body that seems strange. She moves closer to the mirror and twists to be able to scrutinize it.

How strange. The weirdest thing (*Goya pulls back her hair and touches the visible part of her shoulder blade*). What’s happened to me? I don’t remember seeing this before. It’s something that has nothing to do with me. Or at least that’s what I think. The truth is that it’s pretty. It looks like...a little feather, small, iridescent, with shades of turquoise blue, beautiful to tell you the truth, but totally foreign to my skin, until today. (*She*

continues to check the area and explores the upper part of her back with her fingers.) Huh, yes, seems like, seems like there are more, little feathers. Feathers of a pigeon, (excited) of a bird of paradise... (with some alarm) or of a hen, yes, of a chicken...Curiouser and curiouser. The most...curious thing.

Goya continues to examine herself until an acolyte brings her a pair of kitchen shears, a big and heavy instrument. Goya turns to the audience again and observes the shears.

Here is my sin and my destiny. My center of gravity, and it doesn't even belong to me. The intersection of the two scissor blades seems to mock me. Here I am again. Another identical morning. The world repeated and circular, scarred on the inside. Everything *(pauses)* yours.

Scene 2.

Goya turns toward the store, which lights up now. The dressing room disappears into darkness. Goya stands behind the counter and begins organizing the objects and artwork, cutting threads and assessing photos and images.

Voice 1: *(shouting)* Bon diaaaa

Voice 2: Buenos días.....

Voice 3: Good morning

GOYA: *(Addressing the voices)* Good morning! *(To the audience, continuing to organize and work.)* Well, the truth is that they are all the same, good mornings and bad mornings, mediocre ones or splendid ones. They are all equivalent in their sense of expectation. The fallacy of a ritual. *(Suddenly she has a notion and she shouts)* Let's have a bad morning. A morning that offers us unexplored paths, infinite holes that bring you nowhere, where you can become big, become small, smoke hash. Now that's pretty funny. *(Pleased with her notion)* Bad, very bad morniiiiiiiiings!

Her mother arrives, shocked. Her uniform is identical to her daughter's but with a certain perverse and solemn aspect, like a queen of hearts or a fairy-tale stepmother.

MOTHER: What are you talking about? You need to think less. You and your...fantasies. Go and prepare Señora Martínez's order, she's about to get here. Enough with this stupid waste of time. We're way behind. Are you trying to ruin us, with all the things we still have to do right before we open? No good deed...

Goya does as asked. Irene walks up to the counter. Her uniform is similar to Goya's, but with a trace of blue. Goya continues to work as she talks with Irene.

IRENE: Hey, Goya. What's up?

MOTHER: Don't distract her, we have a lot to do.

GOYA: Nothing, just here, cutting up chickens. *(Gesturing toward her mother.)* Removing the eyes from the rabbits. I don't know if you've ever looked at rabbit eyes before; if they are albino, they have this beautiful

transparency and a magic circularity, perfect round moons that stick to the tips of your fingers when you pop them out of their sockets. If the rabbit is fresh, bright, pink, with firm and consistent flesh. Not too big nor too small to stay tender when you cook it. It all comes down to tenderness. Or the lack thereof. Do you like rabbit, Irene?

IRENE: You say the strangest things. I mean of course I like rabbit, although they make me feel bad, they're so cute. My grandmother raised rabbits and I grew fond of them. I used to imagine them wearing stoles or livery. Carrying a briefcase. O dear! O dear! I'm late! I used to bring vegetables to their cages and I think they licked my face. I gave them names: Elvira, Mauricio, Mercedes...

GOYA: ...Mirror, Whitey, Maria...

IRENE: Jet black, Gimena, Alicia...*(they both laugh)*. That's why I feel so bad when they kill them and hang them from a hook, or maybe they drain the blood first: cutting them open and letting the blood run toward an open gutter in the pen. *(Goya observes her for a moment.)* Later, blood on the dogs as they devour the rabbit's innards. *(Irene places her hand on her belly, in pain.)* I remember the viscera were bluish and left fumes in the air. I'm not sure why. As if their souls were escaping or something. So sad. Poor Mauricio.

GOYA: Yeah, that is sad. *(She continues her tasks.)* And here I am cutting this rabbit's head. Señora Martínez's order. At least you don't have to deal with that type of creature. These animals remind me a lot of people and their rituals. Hens, when you open their eggs, it's like an omen: beautiful, round, yellow, that's a good sign; blackish, deformed, that means catastrophe. Without their skin chickens look like children. The heart of a lamb is like a human heart, you know? Sometimes the schools ask us for hearts, or all of the organ meat: heart, liver, lungs you can inflate if you blow through the trachea, they expand and are alive again for an instant. Everyone breathing in unison in science class, like a mute symphony...

IRENE: ...or a squadron of soldiers, identical and skinned. Ah, quiet. I don't know why I just thought of this all of the sudden, but it makes me so scared Goya, what you're saying makes me think about Fernando.

GOYA: How's he doing on his new deployment? It must be weird to live in such an alien world. With different smells and flavors; breathing in a different way, seeing life as if through a space helmet. I read that the earth is rough over there, empty like on the moon, scarred by so much combat...But that area is calm now Irene, you shouldn't worry. All in all, he's so close to getting permission and then you'll get married; isn't that the plan? You know that I'm not big on churches but I'm up for being your maid of honor...

IRENE: Of course. I don't know why you don't like churches. They're beautiful.

GOYA: Yes, they really are beautiful, just like this market is and then it gets filled with leisurely tourists and their cameras. But on the inside the waste piles up.

IRENE: I don't know what to think, Goya. It's been days since I last heard from Fernando, and that is pretty strange. Tonight I'm supposed to Skype with him, just like every Thursday. If anything has happened to him, I dunno, I'm capable of anything...I can't take this anymore. I'm counting the days, Goya, I'm counting the hours until this bad dream is over. Fernando doesn't even care about the army. He just did it because there was no other way out...If anything happens to him...

Come on, man, he said. You like food.
True, I said.

This kind of kitchen is where the best of the best go to cut their teeth, he said. And Peruvian chow is on the up and up. Fuck duck confit, duck confit is passé.

Good money? I asked.

You'll be making sweet bread, said Tommy, and then he hung up.

Total miscommunication. I thought he said sweet bread, like good dough, nice money. The pay was shit. He had actually said *sweetbread*, stomach, entrails, heart, that kind of thing. They started me off making *anticuchos*, these beautiful medallions of cow heart that are marinated, cooked *a la plancha* and served kebab style. Swear to god, take one bite and you'll wonder why you ever shelled out top dollar for filet. Tender. Spicy. Taste as powerful as anything you'll ever feel.

Of course, this story's not about *anticuchos*. It's about a girl. I'd left Katie up in my hometown when I made my big city move. We'd had a good thing going before. On the same wavelength. Only person I could talk to about how I felt about stuff without getting uncomfortable. I figured if she tagged along, cool, we'd be together, and if not, well, the train rolls onward.

So why did I bolt without giving her notice?

I could say the city seduced me, and that'd be a nice little story. There'd be nice color to that story if I went on about the brutal contrasts of the work, of three stars and big money appetizers in the front of the house, while I was literally elbow deep in viscera, surrounded by real men and women, working class people, immigrants, exiles, people who haven't had half the leg up I've had and always asked me what the fuck Tommy and I were doing as line cooks. I could say all that. But the truth is I left hometown because I was scared shitless of giving myself totally to someone. Scared of losing my personal identity and being defined not as an individual but as an offshoot of her, my smarter, more beautiful, more charismatic better half.

Katie didn't get rid of me right away. There were weekend trips. Buses that smelled like fast food and hand sanitizer. There were phone calls where I told her the separation was poisoning me slowly but I couldn't leave yet. There were fights.

Still she got rid of me. Slowly. No reality TV drama. It was little things. Microscopic things that packed an unexpected wallop in their punches, like they had lead in their gloves.

For example. In the morning I'm an early riser. I'd make coffee. I'd leave her cup to get lukewarm the way she likes it, sip mine as the sun came up. Then I'd shower. I take long hot showers. She'd wake up and chug her coffee. While I was still showering she'd come into the bathroom to pee. We'd talk to each other over the hiss of water. She would always leave without flushing. Just her thoughtful nature. She didn't want to mess with the water pressure while I was showering. Imagine my surprise when she started flushing all of the sudden. Imagine my surprise when what hurt the most was not a scalding blast from the shower or her absent thoughtfulness. It was something more primal than that. I missed the smell of coffee in her urine. I missed that she didn't feel comfortable enough around me anymore to leave her piss in my presence.

The day she called me to tell me I shouldn't come up anymore, I knew that I was in my early 20s and already I had made the biggest mistake of my life.

You're probably thinking, what have I done to change?

Nothing.

Still making *anticuchos*.

Maybe that's my penance. Skewering hearts all day long.

(takes bag of cow hearts/art pieces from the clerk)

Tommy always says the thing about food is that it's a metaphor. A spiritual guide. Life lessons.

If food is a metaphor, sometimes it's a metaphor that laughs in your face.

He leaves.

CUSTOMER 3: *(Mónica Franco, Spain-Panama. Poem "That Old Store")*

A melancholic woman approaches the counter. When she gets there, she recites her poem, facing the audience.

Standing before the counter you and I divided the sad spoils of our love.

She turns to Goya. Quarter and a half. Please. Wrapped up to go.

A quarter of disappointment.

A half of desolation.

My liver slaps the counter with the sloshing sound of a fish without a shadow. Carved up and greyish. No life left in 'em.

I see your lungs hanging from a hook below the cold white light. The gentle breath of my voice enters but cannot inflate them. Apathetic and sad they are nothing more than pipe without a piper.

The implacable knife of time tears apart and slices.

Today the butterflies that once gave life to that stomach fly away. They slip through a crack in the shop window, and the ones that pass by the street look curiously at us. There, standing, both of us in that old store.

Butterflies flying and blood mixed with tears trickling out from under the counter.

And there, before the cold counter, each of us grabs our own dead heart wrapped in wrinkled paper,

Goya gives a bloody parcel to the customer.

and learns to walk without it.

She leaves.

Fade to blackout.



ACT II

Scene 1.

At the bar. Sitting on a swivel stool, her back to the audience, Goya is having a coffee. There are two small wings coming out of her back, nothing pretty, but with iridescent black colors like a pigeon, mixed in with some brilliant turquoise feathers. The wings provoke a sensation of discomfort and anxiety. Jaime, a young waiter who is in love with Goya, is behind the bar. His elbow is planted on the bar and he is bracing himself against his arm, his chin cupped in his hand, as he contemplates Goya with an enormous and absent-minded smile.

JAIME: What's up with you, Goya? You promised to tell me what's going on in your life, remember?

GOYA: There's nothing to tell. I wish I could tell you that I've got a long and sad story, but that's not even true. My reality is simple and repetitive, an identical circle that, I don't know, Jaime, I don't know what I am in this very moment. Right now I feel tiny and stooped, without anything to grab on to...

JAIME: You always say the weirdest things. Here, drink your coffee and maybe you won't feel like you're about to collapse anymore.

GOYA: Or maybe I'll just get smaller and disappear, which wouldn't be such a bad thing. Tell me, Jaime, who are you? What are you thinking about? What's your story?

JAIME: Why does it matter? I'm a simple waiter. Waiters don't have stories.

GOYA: Neither do clerks at the butcher's shop, of "select" byproducts, as if there were different kinds of actions or heartbeats. But here we are, talking, existing for a few minutes or for however long our performance lasts. We stop being anonymous. Perhaps we're not what we appear to be. Perhaps we are variations of snakes or squid.

JAIME: Your mother might be a snake. To me, you're an angel (*affectionately*), a divine and winged creature.

GOYA: More likely I'm just a strange bird, as my wings don't look very transcendent. They look pretty ordinary.

JAIME: Well there's nothing else to do but get used to it all.

GOYA: Get used to it? But why? For what? I admit life can be monotonous and repetitive, but I think you gotta find a way to get out of this time capsule, to escape once and for all...What street do I need to take to get out of here, Jaime?

JAIME: Where are you trying to go?

GOYA: I don't care where.

Irene approaches.

GOYA: Irene, you ok? Is it...Pesetas?

IRENE: No, no it's...Fernando.

GOYA: Did something happen to him? Didn't you talk to him last night?

IRENE: No, I couldn't. He wasn't online. I get so nervous, Goya, if something happened to him, I dunno, I dunno what I would do.

GOYA: Irene, calm down, please, there hasn't been anything in the news. Everything is ok. It's gotta be complicated to live in such a different place, and he probably needs more time to get used to everything. What did he say to you in his last messages?

IRENE: I dunno; he sounded depressed. He told me about men in their tents and women covered in turquoise burkas, like he was trapped in somebody else's dream. He's just out there, out of place, feeling weird, without really understanding what's going on.

GOYA: Did you say burka?

IRENE: Yeah, burka, a lot of women wear them.

GOYA: (*Daydreaming*) It would be so strange to only see life through a screen, through a series of holes, only feeling the fabric on your sweaty face. The taste of salt. The world filtered through a screen, avoiding scars so you don't trip and fall. Another one of life's traps.

IRENE: (*As if talking to herself.*) Fernando told me things weren't going well, that he didn't think what he was seeing was fair, and that he couldn't adjust: nights were so cold and mornings were scorching hot. A lunar landscape, extinct, scarred from so many battles. (*To Goya.*) I'm gonna go crazy if he doesn't get in touch with me soon, Goya. If something happens to him, I don't know what I'm gonna do. We had so many plans...With his leave permit... I just can't, I can't do it...I need to step outside for a moment and see if he sent me a message.

GOYA: Irene, don't worry, don't torture yourself...(*Wanting to cheer her up*). Look, I'm going to open up this hen, let's see what she augurs for us. By the way, yesterday I looked up your middle name and found what it means. It's actually pretty surprising the amount of imagination that goes into thinking up the meanings of names. I looked up Fernando's name, which, of course, means "daring," "bold," and Daniela, Daniela means...*Irene has already left by the time Goya makes a face of deep anguish and unease, her eyes locked on the imaginary content of the deformed innards of the chicken...* "justice."

CUSTOMER 3: (*Referring to Irene, who has just left*) I feel bad for her. I didn't know her boyfriend was in the military, so far away. On top of everything else, mind you. That's the last thing she needs. Her boss, that Pesetas, is a bad person. He makes life impossible for the girls who work at his store. I won't shop there because the way he treats them is an embarrassment. And that rancid fish he sells...I'm surprised she even has a minute to come over here, the poor thing. Who know what other awful things he does to those girls...anyways...(*To Goya's mother*) How much do I owe you?

MOTHER: Look, maybe we should all just mind our own business. Every house is a world, and every-one knows how best to handle their own. Girls today, as you know...they need to be treated with an iron fist.

CUSTOMER 3: Oh sure, as if these girls were somebody's property. And if it was just an "iron fist"...anyways. Maybe I should make a formal complaint about that bad man.

MOTHER: And to whom are you going to complain about him? Tell me? One girl goes away and 100 more take her place. Those girls are here because they want to be, aren't they? And who knows, they might even be looking for...

CUSTOMER 3: If they're here, it's because they have no other options. With all the unemployment. There's no solution. Even these girls' mothers offer them up for marriage like lambs to the slaughter. There is no compassion. There is no decency.

MOTHER: Here, give me 50 and I'll give you change.

CUSTOMER 3: What a travesty. Here you go, God bless you. (*She leaves*).

MOTHER: (*to herself*). Go to hell, nosy gossip-queen. It's always better not to stick your beak in. (*Goya looks at her for a moment, saddened*). What are you looking at? Go back to work.

Scene 2.

CUSTOMER 4: (*Story by Marta Zabaleta, Argentina-London. Adaptation by Tina Escaja.*) Mother and little daughter stop in front of the store.

MOTHER: It'll be Christmas Eve soon, Yanina, tell me what you're in the mood for.

DAUGHTER: I want to eat those sausages.

MOTHER: What sausages?

Daughter points to a product in the case.

DAUGHTER: Those little balls right there. They look like truffles.

MOTHER: Those little balls are...natural.

DAUGHER: What are you talking about?

MOTHER: Umm...they aren't "made;" they come...from an animal. They are the testicles of an animal. My father liked to eat them.

DAUGHTER: Ugh, that’s gross.

MOTHER: Honestly, I never tried bull testicles before, nor pig, lamb or goat. Only chicken ones. But your grandfather ate them all, and it was totally natural, same goes for eyes, tongue, tripe, guts, brains, cow brains and brains from other animals. And he found it all delicious. The real difficulty was to find someone who knew how to cook them.

The mother addresses the audience. The little girl is still busy looking at the products in the case.

That’s probably why I always saw him eat offal (“poor-people meat,” as my mother used to say, throwing it to the dogs) during the rodeos at the big ranches in the Belgrano region, in the south of the Sante Fe Province, Argentina.

Never at home.

On those rodeo Sundays there was everything. Spirited horses ridden by young strapping men who held tight against the beasts’ furious bucking, and sometimes they even made it to the end of the show still mounted on their saddles. The young calf getting branded, burned on the shoulder blade with a red hot iron bearing the owner’s sign. The festivities were accompanied by the cow organ meats which were grilled with the hide still on, with beef empanadas, white bread and plenty of red wine with cold seltzer. It was illegal to sell Coca Cola in that Province as it was officially classified as an unhealthy beverage. There were also horse races. And an old exquisitely-dressed woman who spoke badly of Evita, the first lady. For the ladies of the ranch estates, she was a dreadful, indecent woman.

Meanwhile, next to where the commotion was taking place, they’d be cooking at least one piece of hide and other meat, on a grill. That is the most exquisite part of a cow: the meat that is attached to the hide, when you eat it right off the skin, without thinking about plates or napkins, when it’s really hot. That’s the essential part.

The mother buys the testicles. Goya gives them to her in the form of a work of art, and the mother and daughter leave.

CUSTOMER 5: *(Poem by Karim Quiroga, Colombia. “Wolf.”)*

A stranger arrogantly approaches the counter. Elegant yet somewhat disheveled at the same time, his clothes stained with what appears to be blood, he also seems to have a tail and perhaps wolf ears as well, but all of these attributes are understated and he is discreet, half animal half person.

To the audience. He speaks and gestures arrogantly and with a touch of intuitive, predatory aggression.

I admire your acting

Wolf who hides his fangs

and your insatiable hunger –

He makes a threatening animalistic gesture.

Polite at the dinner table

On the verge of devouring a delicious bite.

He licks his lips.

There you are in fine form at the feast

Telling cowboy stories

Only your voice can be heard. The audience raves. And claps, and demands more.

Excited, hearing imaginary cheers.

They celebrate the occurrence of love

They deliver you

To the daughter

Who, with dignity and grace, is advanced in years.

So ready for what she deserves. And there you are, taking advantage of Innocence. Senselessness.

They deliver you to the daughter. And to her dowry.

The family inheritance. The end of the problems at your home

He makes a scatological gesture.

And in your stomach.

Maybe you’ll keep on chasing your prey here and there

You’ll come back to the house full, your muzzle spotted

“Where were you?” she asks

“I fell,” you reply, “into a pool of blood.”

He picks up the parcel from the cashier and leaves.

CUSTOMER 6: *(Poem by María Ángeles Pérez López, Spain.)*

An actor approaches the audience.

The Butcher Sharpens his Knife

He spreads out the dirty butcher’s chart,

the word animal and its fear,

its syllables cut with precision

as if you could carve

a noun (pig, chicken, cow)

without blood splattering the walls.

As if you could be thinking about

the sweet contours of a sphere,

about the love of numbers and the cosmos

while you plunge in the blade

create incision and harmony in the meat.

Salt scabs over that wound

and so hunger preserves the torment

of seeking refuge in the clean split,

in the blade of metal and the paper

that catches the spray in every trade

and is the decapitation of the innocent.

The hand trembles, the hand that is supposed to be exact.

If writing “butcher.” If “innocent.”

The actor leaves.

Scene 3.

Irene crosses the stage with an enormous knife. She seems lost in thought and frazzled. Goya looks at her, horrified, and calls to her.

GOYA: Irene!! Irene!!

Goya's mother forces her to keep working. Goya obeys.

Fade to black.

ACT III

Scene 1.

Dressing room. Goya, facing the audience, is once again being ritualistically dressed by the acolytes. When Goya describes the way Pesetas died, shadow puppets begin to form on the other side of the stage and depict the tragedy in its most elemental and violent components, culminating with the shadow of Irene's body, hanging. Goya's movements reflect the events she describes and synchronize at times with the shadow puppets, giving off an impression of simultaneity and identification.

GOYA: They buried her on a day so radiant it suffocated the few mourners who had come in their black mourning attire. The hole reserved for Irene, in the manner of a false tomb grave, was raised a few meters above our heads in that city of the deceased, and as the coffin was raised and slowly swung back and forth there were two moments when we feared it would fall apart. Only Jaime and I came from the market as nobody could really afford to skip work that day, you know, the crisis... On the day of the tragedy I tried, but couldn't get there in time. Irene had come down to the loading dock with her knife firmly in her hand. The boss's truck arrived. The vehicle backed up until it reached the edge of the loading dock where Irene was waiting. Pesetas jumped out of the truck and headed to the trunk to unload the big wooden boxes of seafood, huge boxes, rectangular and not very deep, boxes of a humid dark color. Irene did not move. First the red snapper, with their transparent eyes and mouths agape in agony. Then the sardines, dozens of sardines, hundreds of them with their silver bodies all packed in together. Then a giant tuna which Pesetas swung over his shoulder and skillfully unloaded into a white Styrofoam box filled with crushed ice. Lastly the monkfish: big, small, with horrendous expressions and squashed heads. Suddenly Pesetas notices Irene is not moving. Irene peace incarnate, Irene a sea anchored at a magnetic point; rigid and imperturbable with her long clean white coat and her plastic apron yellowish and torn and in need of repair. Pesetas is about to insult her, but he remains absorbed in looking at her, looking at her opaque eyes. He slowly walks up to her. *(She gestures on her own body, insinuating her disgust with Pesetas' actions.)* He reaches out with his frozen hand that is covered with scales and tries to caress the girl's cheek and neck, her right shoulder, her small breast. Her arm moves quickly and independent of the rest of her body, independent of her expressionless face, and stabs the long knife into the man's stomach. He continues to look at her, and she keeps stabbing him, one, two, three times, ten times, while her apron, her hair and face get covered in red liquid with each blow. The man falls heavily to the floor, with an opaque sound, and the girl watches the smoking blood mix with the filthy bubbling streams that trickle out toward the small gutter that lines the edge of the loading dock.

She pauses. Irene's swollen shadow rises and appears to hang, to balance...

As soon as I heard the scream, I dropped my scissors and ran to the loading dock behind the market. I climbed the stairs two steps at a time until I reached the basement and its awful stench. I pushed through the small crowd that had gathered there until I came to her bare feet. Irene was swinging gently, hanging from an enormous meat hook to which she had tied one of the cords they use to transport the boxes. The boxes filled with fish she had used to climb up to the hook lay toppled at her feet. The scattered and trampled sardines kept their silver sheen against the reddish river flowing from Pesetas' blind and eviscerated body.

She pauses.

I read later on that a couple soldiers from Fernando's unit had gone into a village and murdered a bunch of farmers and shepherds. Beforehand, they had methodically separated the women from the men, raped the women and young girls after removing their burkas and then brought them to the commanding officer, their blood absorbed by the roughness in a satellite of scars. Fernando was one of them, but maybe he couldn't bring himself to follow suit because of his conscience and his part in the conflict ended right then and there. He was the only casualty in his unit that day.

And now here I am again, in this perfect and circular ritual, at the exact point where I am herded into the time capsule, that simulacrum, rotting and gelatinous like Pesetas' eyes in Irene's hand as she swung gently and alone in the marine breeze. Eyes of a burnt out moon, cesspool eyes, frog eyes embedded in my memory. And now here I am, *(Reciting. She moves heavily, as if on the moon, in such a way that the acolytes escort her to the center of the stage).* "Trying to balance,/the first notion./Oscillating between being and reflection./Barely looking around, weightless and immovable in my space suit,/perhaps the center of the theorem, perhaps the contour of this illusory cartography that names and programs us." *(She stops, emphatic, and addresses the audience.)* "La verité qui cache qu'il n'y en a pas." Truth hides what does not exist.

(Absurdly) Getting up early every day, it makes you insane...It makes you an idiot, it makes you detached and ridiculous like a marionette, like an inopportune beetle. Every generation a generation of shortcomings and debts, a generation of unresolved troubles, of unemployment, of stagnation.

(She recites again while the acolytes again escort her to the center of the stage. Goya labors to lift her foot, and then the other, as if she were on the moon.) "And I am floating, trying to balance,/the first inflection,/the origin and norms of my hopeless worry and my visceral anger." *(She pauses).* "I am...nothing." *She turns around and with her back to the audience they can now better see the enormous and disturbing iridescent wings, like those of a pigeon or a hen, and the turquoise feathers peppered with dirt. She positions herself in front of the store.*

She lowers her head. (Inconsistent) The...strangest thing. *The stage goes dark just as the sound of a knife or an axe chopping heavily, like the sound of a guillotine.*

FIN



PRAE

your place in the revolution

Bessie F. Zaldívar

“On Jan. 19, the spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Liz Throssell, said that, ‘between 29 November and 22 December, at least 22 people were killed in the context of post-electoral protests -- among them, 21 civilians and one police officer.’” -CNN

You collect the beer bottles drunk last night to use them for the Molotov cocktails of tomorrow. No — you don’t. Of course you don’t.

You know people who do. Some personally, some through Facebook, some personally who know someone through Facebook, and some through Facebook who know someone personally.

Do you wish you were the sort of person who assembles Molotov cocktails from the beer bottles of last night? To throw them at the Tegucigalpa Marriott and Presidential Palace, screaming, “¡Revolución! ¡Capitalistas! ¡Gringos, fuera de mi país!” Perhaps you would to have your picture taken in the midst of the revolution? Yes, you can see it: smoke from the tear gas, you stand in the middle wearing a red bandana and a Ché Guevara shirt, one fist in the air and the other holding a cloth infused with vinegar to your mouth — because you’ve been told that’s how you breathe when they throw tear gas at the protesters. Yes, that would be a great profile picture with many, many likes. Except you could never post that, because you have your whole family on Facebook. They would disown you. Maybe, if you were part of the starving population, you could do stuff like Molotov cocktails, because there would be nothing from which to be disowned.

Maybe if you were Alexia, your friend who’s your age but poor, it would be tangible to blow up the Tegucigalpa Marriott and Presidential Palace. Except Alexia, your friend who’s your age and *pobre*, can’t leave her house because of her six-month-old baby. A baby that vomits all day, and even her best diapers look like green, contaminated pudding.

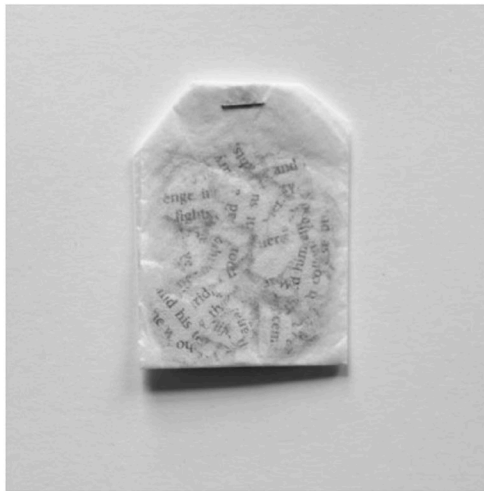
Just last week she discovered the special, weird-smelling, expensive formula she’s been buying for the baby’s reflux is a watered-down formula of the lowest quality, which can make the baby sicker— but that’s the only kind of quality that is shipped to this country. You think that’s a great reason for Alexia to throw a Molotov cocktail to the Presidential Palace and scream, “REVOLUTION!” except Alexia would scream, “¡REVOLUCIÓN!” because she doesn’t know English, that’s the language of the rich.

You promised you would teach her English someday, but you’re afraid of going to Alexia’s neighborhood — because she told you the group of boys on her street are the sort of boys who throw Molotov cocktails at the Tegucigalpa Marriott. Once, as she walked to buy some formula for her sick baby, the police stopped her and asked where the plaza was located, and she pretended she didn’t know. Because if she had told them, the boys, who assemble Molotov cocktails and sell *mota* in the plaza, would’ve killed her, put her body in a plastic bag, and threw her in a dumpster for the street dogs and rats to eat. Could you lie if the police asked you where the plaza is located? How could you? The police never ask anything in your neighborhood, because no one sells marijuana there.

So you will never teach English to Alexia or throw a Molotov cocktail or have your picture taken in the revolution — because the people you love will ask, “What could you possibly have to complain about?”

Not watered-down baby formula. No, not that.





Telling Stories

Teabag archive of traditional worldwide stories

I would like to propose this visual artwork as a surrealist, playful alternative way to disseminate stories. The act of sharing or telling a story is therefore associated to the common everyday ritual of drinking tea. The chosen traditional tales, which were written in different languages, were gradually shredded to create a synesthetic process.

Veracruz
Viviane Vives

Was it too hot when you finally arrived, Uncle Al-bert¹? Were you in your winter clothing? Did you sleep naked? Did you have any spare clothes, did you have any money? Did you go to DF right away, or did you stay a few months, looking at that blue sea that makes you cry? I cleaned houses in California, what would they have thought at home. Hungry exiles cannot afford shame or fear. Only at night, when we touch our bellies and think of sea foam.

¹ Great-uncle Al-bert was an exiled Catalan. After the Spanish Civil War, he spent time in a French concentration camp. The Mexican President, Lazaro Cárdenas, extended an invitation to the refugees that lost the war and were suffering in France. Uncle Al-bert never returned to Catalunya.

In the crest of the wave I float.

Como gaivota no ar antes do mergulho.

And I always wanted to be a seagull, spread my feathers

e voar. The wave comes,

I rise, a onda vai, I dive. A lullaby and I am a baby

in my mother's lap. Água salgada suspende

tudo no frio líquido do nada and I have not yet

learned how to swim. Nothing é como antes, when I believed I

could fly. Hoje é o amanhã

de ontem and I still don't know how blue involves

the air of the night. Eu imagino-me pequena, a little girl

who loved the sea. Sentada à beira da rocha, thoughts would

come and go full as the tide.

A lua preta de prata, an ocean of dreams. Then the future

era feito de ouro, no more thoughts and ideas to give

away. Agora mesmo, ora crescida, life embraces me as a shroud. All

is fluid, tudo é nada, enquanto perco-me

na aurora dourada, minha estrada to the center

of a cloud.



Edu Barreto is a poet, graphic designer, and university professor based in Asunción, Paraguay. His work has appeared online and in various print journals, both at the national and international level. As an artist, he works toward creating a bridge between communities, and encourages people to read his work alongside other South American writers, such as those from Asunción and Montevideo.

Korbin Jones is a senior at Northwest Missouri State University studying creative writing, publishing, and Spanish. In the fall, he will pursue his Master of Fine Arts in Poetry at the University of Kansas with full funding. His original works and translations have appeared in *Noctua Review*, *Polaris*, *The Vehicle*, and *Missouri's Best Emerging Poets*, among others.

Eli Binkovitz is a Jewish Chicago poet with a BA in German studies from Oberlin college and contributions in a 2007 translation of Thomas Brasch's collection of poems, *Was Ich Mir Wünsche* ("What I Wish For Myself") from German into English. Their poems have appeared in *Rising Phoenix Review*, *Vagabond City Lit*, and *SWWTM Every Day*.

Kimberly Brincklow is a native of Dunedin Florida and received her BA in Visual Arts with a minor in Anthropology at Eckerd College in 2018. Following a successful Senior Thesis Show, (*Dreaming in Color*) at the Cobb Gallery, Kimberly continues to enter local shows. She hopes to become a full time painter as she applies to graduate school. Her choice of medium is acrylic painting, the limits of which she continues to explore. She is also a Registered Nurse who recognizes the value of art as being therapeutic and therefore enjoys creating paintings that elevate the spirits of those who view her work. She has three married children and lives with her husband and youngest son. Her artwork is held in private collections.

Ana Brotas is a Portuguese interdisciplinary artist that studied Fine Art at both Central Saint Martins and Goldsmiths University of London. Her work has been exhibited internationally and awarded at Camberwell's and Deptford's Visual Arts Festivals. Currently, she is coordinating the MAE art project.

Simon Brown is a self-taught poet and translator from the territory of the federally unrecognized Passamaquoddy nation, in southwestern New Brunswick, Canada. His French and English-language texts have been presented in conceptual pieces, collaborative performances, poetry collections and magazines such as *The Equalizer*, *Vallum*, *Watts*, *Möbius* and *Crux Desperationis*. As a translator, he has adapted texts by Erin Robinsong, Angela Carr, Danielle LaFrance and Steve Savage, among others. The collection *Grande poussière* (with Maude Pilon, squint, Montréal) appeared in 2017 and the chapbook *Outre-flaques* (Vanloo, Marseille) is forthcoming in 2018.

Mark Budman was born in the former Soviet Union and speaks English with an accent. His writing appeared in *Five Points*, *PEN*, *American Scholar*, *Huffington Post*, *World Literature Today*, *Daily Science Fiction*, *Mississippi Review*, *Virginia Quarterly*, *The London Magazine* (UK), *McSweeney's*, *Sonora Review*, *Another Chicago*, *Sou'wester*, *Southeast Review*, *Mid-American Review*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, *Short Fiction* (UK), and elsewhere. He is the publisher of the flash fiction magazine *Vestal Review*. His novel *My Life at First Try* was published by Counterpoint Press. He co-edited flash fiction anthologies from Ooligan Press and Persea Books/Norton.

Cristina DeSouza is a poet and physician, living in Vermont. She is originally from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and writes both in English and in Portuguese. She has had several poems published both in the US and in Brazil and in 2011 had a book of poem released by Vidraguas Publishing Company in Brazil. Her email address for contact is colo2309@gmail.com.

Woody Dismukes is a poet, musician and author living in Jackson Heights, Queens. He is Counselor/Advocate for ECDO, Inc.'s High School Youth Program and has taught poetry at University Settlement's Creative Center in New York City. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *The Aurorean*, *Newton Literary* and *Huizache*.

Federico Federici (1974) is a physicist and writer. Among his works: *L'opera racchiusa* (2009, Lorenzo Montano Prize), *Dunkelwort* (2015) presented at Literaturfestival *Stadtsprachen* in Berlin, *Mrogn* (2017, Elio Pagliarani Prize). <http://federicofederici.net>

Jan Heiman is an artist who lives and works in the San Francisco Bay Area. She dabbles in both traditional and digital media. She loves raisins, hates cantaloupe and has recently changed her tune regarding cashews. Someday she hopes to have a dog.

Addison Hoggard is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Asheville, holding degrees in Creative Writing/English and French. He is interested in exploring spaces of linguistic liminality and intersectionality.

Desirée Jung has published translations, fiction and poetry in *Exile*, *The Dirty Goat*, *Modern Poetry in Translation*, and many others (for more information, see: www.desireejung.com). She has also participated in several artist residencies including the Banff Centre, in Canada, Valparaíso, in Spain, and Martha's Vineyard in the US. Her book of short stories *Desejos Submersos* is published by Chiado Editora. She has a film degree from Vancouver Film School as well as an MFA in Creative Writing and a PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of British Columbia.

Manivillie Kanagasabapathy completed a poem a day challenge in 2016, where she successfully wrote 366 poems, and was one the winners of City of Toronto's My City, My Six, 6-word story contest. The piece, *Mother Tongue*, is about feeling of alienation that can accompany immigrant children, belonging to both cultures and neither.

R. Keith is the author of *Chicken Scratch* (EYEAMEYE books), *Background* (inquieta press), *How to design a hail storm* (Another new calligraphy), *Signature Move* (Knives Forks and Spoons) and *re: verbs* (Bareback editions), as well as six chapbooks. His writing appears in Canadian and international literary journals.

Stephanie Laterza's short fiction has appeared in *The Nottingham Review*, *Writing Raw*, *Literary Mama*, and *Akashic Books*. Her poetry has been published in *Orunque Siamo*, *Newton Literary*, *San Francisco Peace and Hope*, *Literary Mama*, and *Meniscus Magazine*. Her legal thriller, *The Boulevard Trial*, has been acclaimed most recently for its, "Vivid Descriptions of Women's Varied Experiences."

Nick Leabee is a realist oil painter currently living in DeLand, FL with his wife and two children. He is a graduate of Stetson University, having studied painting under professor Gary Bolding. Nick's major artistic influences are 19th century trompe l'oeil and still-life artists, as well as early 20th century surrealists and contemporary pop-surrealists.

KA Masters invites you to read her debut novel, *The Morning Tree*, published by Indie Gypsy. Follow her on Goodreads as K_A_Masters.

Irène Mathieu is a pediatrician, writer, and public health researcher. She is the 2016 winner of the Bob Kaufman Book Prize and Yemassee Journal's Poetry Prize, and author of the book *orogeny* (Trembling Pillow Press, 2017) and poetry chapbook *the galaxy of origins* (dancing girl press & studio, 2014). Irène has received fellowships from the Fulbright Program and the Callaloo Creative Writing Workshop. She is a poetry book reviewer for *Muzzle Magazine*, an editor for the *Journal of General Internal Medicine's* humanities section, and a contributing author on the *Global Health Hub* blog. Irène holds a BA in International Relations from the College of William & Mary and a MD from Vanderbilt University. She is on the speakers' bureau for Jack Jones Literary Arts and currently resides in Philadelphia.

Dona Mayoora is a bilingual poet, author, artist, inkophile and techie.

Adelina Molina was born in the Dominican Republic and raised in New York City by her mother, and her writing is inspired by both experience, environment, culture, and gender. She is a full time employee, a single mother, and student. In her spare time she can be found with her daughter, writing, and reading.

Lisa Done Moore is writer and musician working as a Physician Assistant in trauma and acute care surgery in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. She is an MFA candidate enrolled in the University of British Columbia's Creative Writing graduate program and has an interest in weird fiction, horror, true crime and medical narratives. Her short fiction is published in the Canadian literary/art subscription service Papirmasse.

Eric Odynocki is an emerging writer of poetry and fiction from New York. He is a first generation American who grew up in a multicultural household: his mother is Mexican and his father was Ukrainian & Jewish. Eric's work has been published in Acentos Review and is forthcoming in the *Westchester Review*.

Lisa Allen Ortiz is a poet and author of *Guide to the Exhibit* which won the 2016 Perugia Press Prize last year. Her poems have appeared in *The Best New Poets 2013* and been featured on *Verse Daily*. She lived in Peru for two years where she began translating Blanca Varela and made the acquaintance of her family. Find more information about her at: lisaallenortiz.com.

Nika Ostby is a North Dakota-based photographer focusing on conceptual portraiture. She is fascinated by the redemptive quality of the photograph. In a society caught by the crosshairs of idealism and reality, portraiture provides a much-needed sense of control.

John Pluecker is a writer, translator, artist, and co-founder of the collaborative Antena with Jen Hofer. His most recent book-length translations are *Gore Capitalism* (Semiotext(e), 2018) and *Antígona González* (Les Figs Press, 2016), and he has published many chapbooks, zines, and one full-length book of poetry and image, *Ford Over* (Noemi Press, 2016).

Jorge Galván Flores works at the intersection of art and commodity culture, contemplating notions of origin, desire and labor using both innovative and traditional media and craft. Galván Flores received his Bachelor of Science in Industrial Design from the University of Houston. He is a 2015 recipient of an Individual Artist Grant from the Houston Arts Alliance. His work has been featured in *RoadSignUSA Project*, *Fresh Arts*, and *Blaffer Art Museum*.

Kirsten Ruginski is a fine art photographer in St. Petersburg, Florida. She specializes in analog, darkroom, and historical processes, as well as mixed media. Kirsten has been working and exhibiting in local galleries and shows since graduating in 2014, and proudly serves as the Visual Arts Coordinator & Gallery Manager at Eckerd College.

Ryoko Sekiguchi was born in Tokyo and has lived in Paris since 1997. Her books in French include *La Voix sombre* (2015), *Manger fantôme* (2012), *L'Astringent* (2012), *Ce n'est pas un hasard* (2011), *adagio ma non troppo* (2007), *Deux Marchés* (2005), and *Héliotropes* (2005). Three of her collections have previously been translated into English: *Héliotropes* (Sarah O'Brien, La Presse, 2008), *Two Markets, Once Again* (Sarah Riggs, Post-Apollo Press, 2008), and *Tracing* (Stacy Doris, Duration, 2003). Her work in this issue of *Obra/Artifact* appears courtesy of Les Figs Press.

Lindsay Turner's first collection of poems, *Songs & Ballads*, is forthcoming from Prelude Books in 2018. Her translations from the French include *The Next Loves*, by Stéphane Bouquet (forthcoming, Nightboat Books, 2018) and a co-translated book of philosophy by Frédéric Neyrat, *Atopias* (Fordham University Press, 2017). Her work in this issue of *Obra/Artifact* appears courtesy of Les Figs Press.

David Shames is a literary translator and PhD student in Hispanic Languages and Literature at Boston University. He has published fiction in outlets such as *Vantage Point* and *Liquid Imagination*, and in 2012 he was awarded first prize in the annual short story contest held by *Short Fiction Journal* published by the University of Plymouth, UK. David is also a practicing translator and a scholar of translation studies, and he has published an article on León Felipe and Jorge Luis Borges' translations of Walt Whitman in the peer-reviewed journal *Colloquy*.

Alysha Sidhu lives in Chicago where she makes art.

Patrick Sylvain is a poet, writer, social critic, and photographer. He is published in several scholarly and creative anthologies, journals and reviews, and edited collections, including: *The Idea of Haiti: Rethinking Crisis and Development*, edited by Millery Polyné. Sylvain received his B.A. Political Science & Social-Psychology from the University of Massachusetts, Ed.M. from Harvard University Graduate School of Education (Conant Fellow), and MFA at Boston University (Robert Pinsky Global Fellow). He has taught at Brown (affiliated with Africana Studies), UMass/Boston (Anthropology) and Harvard (AAAS). Sylvain is pursuing a Ph.D. in English at Brandeis University (Shirle Dorothy Robbins Creative Writing Prize Fellow). Forthcoming poetry chapbook: *Underworlds* (Central Square Press, 2018); and a book of essays (in Spring 2019).

Drake Truber embraces the influence of substantial drawing. He has exhibited in various gallery and museum group shows including The Rochester Contemporary Art Center, Fort Wayne Museum of Art, and the Department of Education. His interest in languages nurtured the creation of two video games: *Koine Crazy* (Flash-based), teaching ancient Greek vocabulary, and *Vindac* (Unity-based), a Latin preposition game. *Vindac* was in the Independent Game Festival and is now available on the Apple App Store. Truber is illustrating his second children's book and draws live caricature portraits at events. He is currently studying entertainment illustration at Art Center College of Design. Follow him on Instagram and Twitter.

Viviane Vives is a Fulbright scholar for Artistic Studies (Tisch School Of the Arts, NYU) Viviane's recent publications are poetry by Southeast Missouri University Press, a short story—*Todo es de Color*—in *Litro Magazine of London*, and a ten page story in *The Write Launch*: “In the oblique and dreamlike style of Marguerite Duras, Viviane Vives weaves memories of her ancestors and place—Nice, Barcelona, Perth, New South Wales, Texas—in ‘*Dialogues With Your Notebook*,’ a stunning literary achievement.”

Bessie F. Zaldívar is a creative writer from Tegucigalpa, Honduras. She is currently getting her undergraduate degree in Creative Writing and Psychology at Lindenwood University in Belleville, Illinois. *Your Place in the Revolution* is inspired by the recent events in Honduras, specifically the current's president illegal reelection, voter fraud, and the death of over 40 protesters.

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To our readers who challenge us to create these pages,

To our contributing authors and artists who give these pages meaning,

To our family and friends who support us during the long hours,

To Stetson's MFA of the Americas' faculty & visiting artists who inspire us,
Terri Witek, Cyriaco Lopes, Teresa Carmody, Urayoan Noel, Laura Mullen, Veronica Gonzalez Peña, John Keene, John Pluecker, Sergio Bessa, Karen Tei Yamashita, Erica Baum,

To our faculty advisor who guides us,
Dr. Teresa Carmody (Director of the MFA of the Americas),

And to our founding editors who created this opportunity,
Rebecca Renner, Jared Alan Smith, & Lucianna Chixaro Ramos,

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